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No. 134. Aug/Sept 99

ISSN 0310-2890

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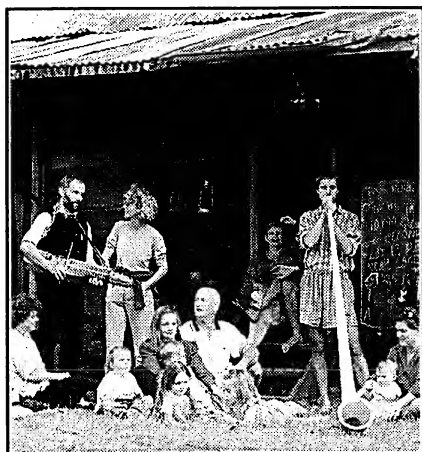
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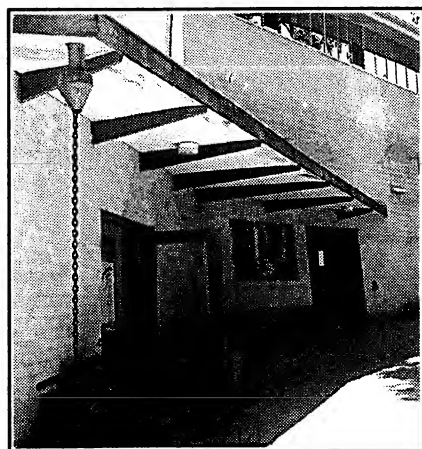
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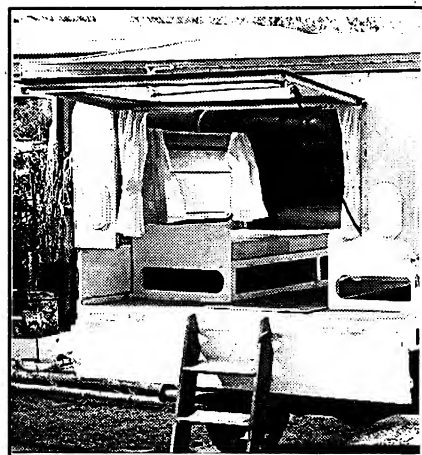
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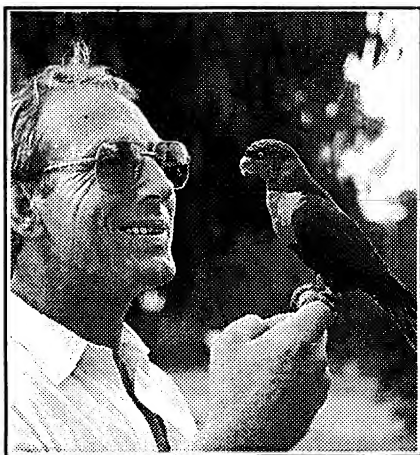
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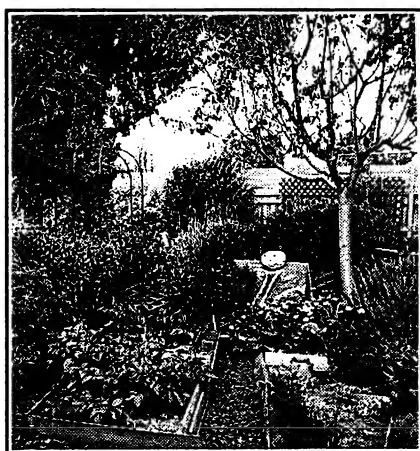
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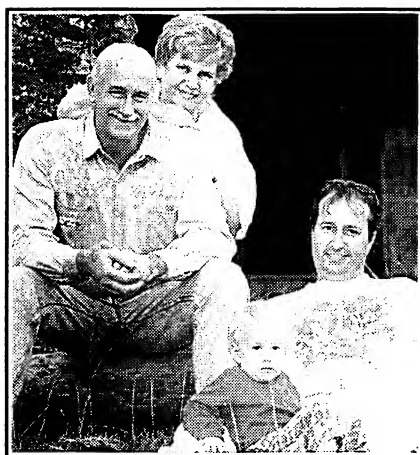
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COVER PHOTOS

Front Cover: Eco-village living is a growing trend in Australia and around the world. Our cover shows enthusiastic proponents of the village lifestyle, Barry and Christine Davies, with their son Grant and his daughter. Read Tara Andre's story beginning on page 6 to find out more about the attractions of life at Kookaburra Park Eco-Village.

Back Cover: Ezro Low enjoys helping his mum collect edible weeds. You'll be amazed at what is growing on your own doorstep, even in the city. See Bec Low's story on page 15.

Edited by Megg Miller and Mary Horsfall.

Published by Grass Roots Publishing Pty Ltd, Box 117, Seymour 3661. Ph: 03-5794-7256, fax: 03-5794-7285. For classifieds see page 71.

We take great care in selecting and verifying all material that appears in the magazine, but do not necessarily share the views expressed in letters and articles, nor do we accept responsibility for the accuracy of statements made by contributors. Printed by Newsprinters P/L, Melbourne Rd, Shepparton 3630. Ph: 03-5831-2312.

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GUMNUT GOSSIP

by Megg Miller

The question most frequently put to me when I meet or catch up with readers is how do we find working in town? After enjoying years of the tall but true tales about our rural-based office they are curious about the inevitable changes and how we cope with them.

Let me first say that we swapped possums for mice and that there have been anguished wails and subversive muttering over these bothersome rodents. The unsuspecting crew here left sliced bread, packet soup and other tempting food on the bench and placed used cartons and containers on the floor near the rubbish bin. The mice must have thought they'd found Utopia. Strengthened by their elevated nutritional intake they then made forays to the nearest offices, encouraged by crumbs on the floor, food wrappers in the bin and snacks in desk drawers. Need I add any more? Measures were put in place and the guilty caught, further temptation supposedly removed. Old habits die hard, however, and I still occasionally find a plastic bag of sugar sitting on the bench or some other item of food left uncovered. I dare say we'll be rediscovered by a mouse on reconnaissance in the not too distant future and the excitement will start again.

What continues to be wonderful about our current location is accessibility to couriers and delivery trucks. Our parcels come to the door now. You wouldn't believe the number of packages I found in unexpected places around the farmlet. Deliveries would occur late at night and before work in the morning, or worse, drivers would give up and leave their package at a takeaway food shop or garage in the local town. Sometimes it took weeks to learn of the item's location, and months passed with some things before we were alerted to their existence. It's sheer magic now to enjoy regular and efficient deliveries. Another asset is the close proximity to film developing. Being close enough to have a film developed without allowing an hour's travelling time is a blessing, as is being able to access the courier service the local newspaper has with our printer in Shepparton.

On the down side, there have been a few incidents this month which remind us how lucky we all were on the farm. Vicki's car was backed into one evening and damaged. Fortunately, the embarrassed culprit was the proprietor of the car yard and mechanical workshop next door. He was

not, however, as embarrassed as Vicki after denying the car was hers, only to realise her husband had swapped cars, and then having to own up that she did own the car in question. Such a mishap could be considered inevitable – some evenings you can't find your car amongst the many others using the parking space while attending the gym next door.

A few nights after Vicki's misadventure, I locked my keys in the car and discovered their absence when ready to leave at about 10pm. The torch was also in the car so I had nothing to shine in and see if the keys were in the ignition or if I'd misplaced them somewhere in the office. Fortunately, matches were handy and so in a moment of ingenuity I tried lighting lengths of cardboard while simultaneously peering into the car. I was lucky not to set my hair ablaze! A call to the RACV brought help. 'Might take us a few minutes,' two seedy looking characters explained. 'We're not quick because we've never been car thieves.' Slow they were, but I was very grateful for their assistance.

More recently, when working late, the lights suddenly went off. By happy chance, I was at the front of the building and not in my office or I would have had to crawl out or be perpetually lost in the dark amongst the open-fronted offices. It was blokes' hour at the gym and I could see half-dressed figures leaping into cars and driving off, indicating the blackout wasn't restricted to our office alone. The lights were on in houses across the street so I smelt a rat – vandalistic kids at the power board, again! The gym keeper and I cordially introduced ourselves and inspected the power board by car light. All the switches were off. I'd been caught one long weekend previously when I went out for coffee and returned to find the office in darkness. I'd had to go and buy a torch to find my way in to collect belongings. I'd looked hopelessly at the power board but wasn't familiar with what should be on or off. A check a few days later demonstrated the correct position of all switches. 'Yep,' I said confidently, 'the kids have switched the top row off'. It was a simple matter to restore light. 'There'll be some singing soon,' the gym keeper offered, after we had exchanged pleasantries. 'I hope it won't bother you.' 'Give me a couple of seventies numbers,' I shouted, as we entered our respected premises. Men in

workout gear and seventies' songsters? Yes, the environment here is very different but it's not dull.

Periodically, I'm called upon to remind everyone of the issues surrounding chain letters. Not a month goes by without a complaint coming in on this subject. What is surprising is that some very sensible people become involved and target our readers via Feedback. Mary commented recently that these schemes have become more complex and sophisticated over the years. One brought to our attention lately had been instigated, 'with a vision to generate wealth for worthy causes by empowering those with a dream of a better world'. Hmm. It requested the usual donation of \$5 to the addresses listed. No names were featured. We all know putting cash in the mail is foolish. At least this racket wasn't prophesising dire happenings to those who refused to participate. Schemes that promise great financial return for a miniscule outlay are illegal. You are entitled to complain to the Office of Fair Trading in your state if targeted by perpetrators of such schemes, the maximum penalty under the Fair Trading Act being \$10,000, if charged. Should you be the recipient of a chain letter and don't wish to take action, shred or compost the offending material.

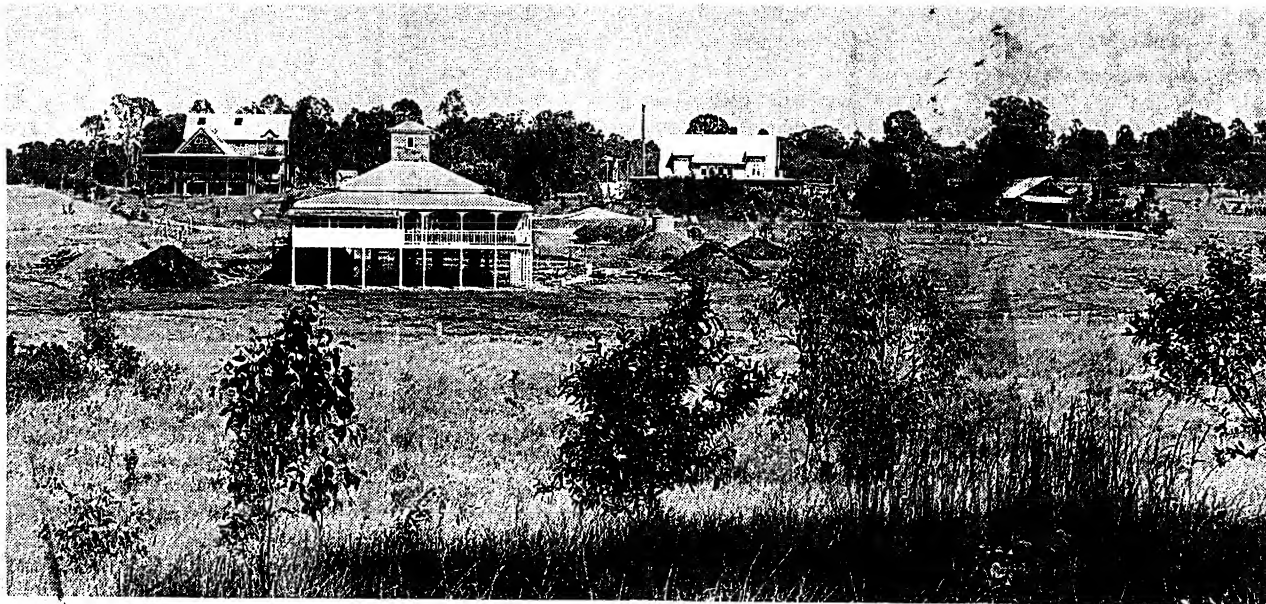
A thank you card recently arrived from the anonymous cheese maker I mentioned in this column last issue. 'Thank you for the wonderful help when I was at crisis point with my 26 litres of milk!! I couldn't get any rennet anywhere so tried without it. I skimmed off most of the cream and made lovely butter and the rest I just let sit. It looks okay so far – too early to hang up yet for drying – exciting! We make our own apple cider and vinegar, olives, jam, honey, vegies.' Well, Renate of Sorento, we'll all be waiting to hear how the cheese develops and also about some of your other self-sufficiency activities.

Renate's little note encapsulates much of what *Grass Roots* is about. Resourcefulness in having a go and making the most of what is at hand, willingness to try new ideas and experiences and common sense in knowing when to reach out and seek assistance. The note also mentioned excitement. We've all experienced the elation associated with the birth of livestock, the first crop of home-grown fruit, the completion of a daunting task. It's hard to maintain that enthusiastic, eager spark day in day out, but it does add special zest to life. And who doesn't need an extra measure of oomph?

KOOKABURRA PARK

A WORKABLE ALTERNATIVE

by Tara Andre, Doonan, Qld.



The eco-village concept is gaining momentum around the world in countries as diverse as Israel, Hungary, Argentina and Scotland, with the idea being interpreted to suit the needs of the communities and the potentials and limitations of the environments. Australia in particular is a vibrant centre of eco-village growth. What's the attraction? For most, it's the search for a sense of community and a desire to live sustainably within the natural environment. Tara Andre's story about Barry Davies and the development of Kookaburra Park Eco-Village will uplift and enlighten.

The massive task of turning a 194 hectare (480 acre) property into a thriving eco-village, was a journey of many steps. Barry Davies, previously a conventional land developer, was the motivating force behind the project. It is not surprising that during the development of Kookaburra Park Barry also experienced deep and lasting personal growth. Talk to Barry today about the village and his conversation flows easily with spiritual insights as well as practical concepts.

Barry first saw the property, Ox Hill, seven years ago on a buying excursion with his real estate agent and felt an immediate affinity with the land. At that time, however, Ox Hill was not for sale.

Months later the property did become available and Barry surprised his agent by signing the contract without having set foot on the land. Intuitively he knew the purchase was the right decision, but at that time planned to divide the property into five-acre blocks. During the

first inspection of his new acquisition he found the potential of Ox Hill was ten times better than first imagined. This gently undulating land possessed many qualities, including a variety of creeks, and Barry was captivated by its character.

The process of subdivision began in the usual fashion. A surveyor was called to lay out the roads on paper and it was planned that every block would have a creek running through it. In hindsight, Barry realises this original plan would have been a disaster.

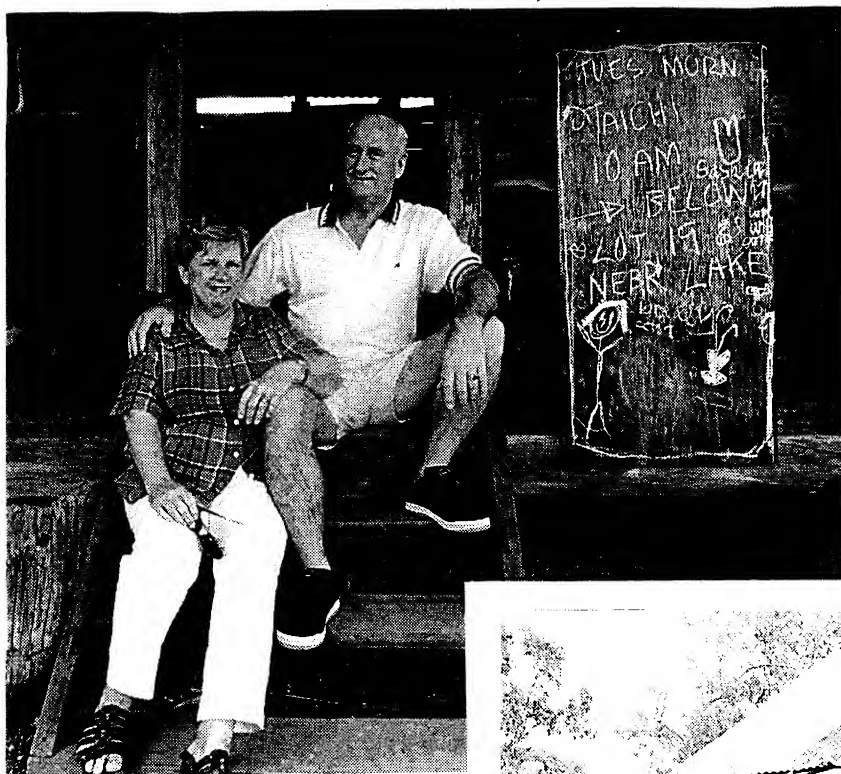
Around this time his son Grant was introduced to the video, *Global Gardener*, with Bill Mollison. Impressed with the concept of permaculture, Grant asked his father why a sustainable approach couldn't be taken and if an eco-village could be established on Ox Hill. Barry had no idea at that stage what an eco-village was and demanded to know what on earth his son was talking about.

Little did Barry realise how the words sustainable and eco-village would spin

such radical changes into his own life.

After learning more about the benefits of permaculture, Barry decided to contact Bill Mollison for help, but found Bill had departed for overseas the day before. Max Lindegger was then approached to design a plan through his company, Ecological Solutions. Max agreed and a week was spent walking the land and placing blocks on paper. Each block was given a north-facing aspect and each house site had no more than a 20 degree slope. House sites were planned so that neighbours could only look across from the side and never down on each other.

From the very beginning Barry saw water as one of the most important factors. Electric pumps now send water to holding tanks on the highest point, then gravity feed down. Max recommended between 600 and 1000 litres each day be the maximum usage. Residents are encouraged to be mindful of water conservation and each property is supplied



Left: Christine and Barry Davies in front of a 100 year old slab hut, now restored and used as the Village's commercial area.

with a water meter. Although not essential, the meters allow residents to self-regulate their own water consumption.

Other than the criteria which excludes dogs or cats, there are no hard and fast rules. Residents are simply encouraged to adopt practices which live up to permaculture's first ethic, care of the earth and care of people.

Natural methods of fertilising and pest control are supported. Wildlife corridors are encouraged, by growing trees rather than building solid fences to define property boundaries. This also allows a natural flow of energy through and around the property. Privacy is not sacrificed however; with ample water and enthusiasm bare paddocks are quickly turning into permaculture jungles.

Kookaburra Park comprises 124 freehold sites and the remaining area of 146 hectares (360 acres) of common land offers a feeling of spaciousness. The plan also allows for a maximum of two neighbours to each block, with some blocks offering total privacy.

Barry feels it has been a worthwhile experience to reside in his own development and says that while the Village has been through the usual growing pains, it is now reaching maturity. As a group, residents are also experiencing constant personal growth.

As the main coordinator of Kook-



aburra Park, Barry has learned to handle the challenges involved by taking one day at a time, one moment at a time. He feels the most important aspect of the Village is caring for the people who reside there. 'Help people,' he comments, 'and they in turn will care for the land'.

There are around 70 people of varying ages living permanently at the Village now, with more arriving in the near future. Nationalities include 15 ethnic backgrounds which gives the Village a rich diversity. Ages range from the elderly to babies recently born in the Village. All have one thing in common, a desire for sustainable living.

The story of Bard Papegaaij, a computer scientist from the Netherlands, demonstrates how distance was not an obstacle to achieving this goal. Bard and a group of friends started a world-wide search for the right community to move to. They visited sites in Europe, North America, South America and even Asia to find the right location. Eventually, a session on the Internet revealed a strange looking bird with the words 'Kookaburra Park Eco-Village' written under it. On opening up the web site, the group instantly realised their search had ended. Although Bard and his friends had to travel over 20,000 kilometres to their

new home, they now feel Kookaburra Park is their dream turned to reality.

Moving to country areas can often create difficulties with unemployment and reduced income. At Kookaburra Park, however, there are opportunities for employment in the Village. With houses being constantly built, builders and assistants are required. The body corporate offers part-time employment and mail order businesses established on the Internet. Education is on Barry's priority list and people with ability to teach life skills are in demand. Eco tourism is another area of opportunity – in fact one of Barry's main frustrations is not being able to offer enough accommodation to people wishing to visit and experience the lifestyle.

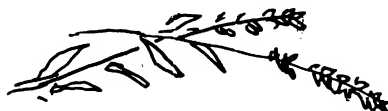
The problem of an aging population is now being discussed at the Village and the possibility of units being planned for the future. The handful of elderly residents living at the Village already are being watched over and cared for by the community.

The advantages of living in a village such as Kookaburra Park are many. In a world where violence, theft, and pollution are becoming accepted as the norm, village life offers security, a

clean environment, but most of all, support of likeminded people. Community life can offer an opportunity to step off the treadmill of modern living and enjoy a gentler lifestyle. With rates and body corporate fees costing only \$500 per year and people in the village trading essentials such as food, the pressure of earning large incomes is much reduced.

Permaculture principles and strategies resolve many of the problems facing our society today. Is it possible a concept such as Kookaburra Park is the ultimate permaculture answer? Over the past seven years this eco-village has moved from one man's dream to an established community. Along the way mistakes have been made and solutions found. These valuable on-the-ground experiences offer future community planners a workable blueprint to follow in the future.

For more information contact Barry Davies.
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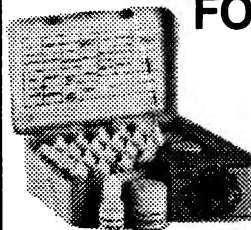
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SUCCESSFUL INVENTING

by Alastair Duhs, Western Springs, Auckland, NZ.

It happens to everyone at least once in their lives. At work in the garden, in the kitchen, on the car, or wherever, and suddenly, you've thought of a brilliant idea! The question is: What do you do with your idea once you've had it?

Unfortunately, most people don't know. Many people fritter away potential money-making schemes simply because they have no concept that their ideas may be valuable. The pages of GR provide many examples. In a recent issue I counted at least 15 products that have considerable money-making potential. Yet it is unlikely that the inventors of these products would have made significant money from their ideas. This however, is a situation that can be remedied. Making money from new ideas is relatively easy, providing you know how. This article explains the process of bringing a new product onto the marketplace, and hopefully, making money while you are doing it!

IN THE BEGINNING

Self-sufficient lifestylers are a very creative group of people. The range of ideas discussed in the pages of GR is proof of this. In the midst of this creativity, the average self-sufficient lifestyle will almost invariably invent a number of products or methods of overcoming problems that he or she has faced. The real secret of becoming an inventor is to realise that the problems you are facing may be shared by others. If so, then your solution may be useful to them. And if this is the case, then you should be (and are!) entitled to make money from your creativity.

An invention is any product or process that is novel. Regardless of whether it relates to hydroponics, solar heating, chimney sweeping, or anything else, if your idea is new, then you are an inventor! In reality, most people have such ideas reasonably frequently. The challenge for inventors is to follow through on their

concepts, to have the necessary faith to say to themselves and others: This is my idea. It is good, and it is worth money!

THE FIRST STEPS

Once you have had a new idea, you should assess the need for your invention. This can be done by asking the following two questions:

- Does my invention solve problems which others are likely to face?
- If so, are other people likely to buy my invention?

The answers to these questions will depend on a number of factors. These include the usefulness of your invention, the size of its market, the number of products likely to compete with your invention, its likely manufacturing cost, and so forth. Even though it might be difficult, it is vital to attempt to realistically answer the two questions above. If a realistic assessment indicates that only a small number of people will be likely to buy your invention, then it is probably best to forget your idea and concentrate on other things. However, if you *realistically* believe that there is a *need*, and a *market* for your invention (and in many cases there is), then you are on the way to becoming a successful inventor!

PROTECTION

In both Australia and New Zealand it is vital that you protect your idea before disclosing it in public in *any* way. To do this you will usually need to visit a patent attorney, and allow him or her to file a patent application on your behalf. Unfortunately, this can be expensive. To reduce some of this expense, it is sensible to shop around. Most patent attorney firms provide similar services, although their fees can vary considerably. Make sure that you are also aware *in advance* of all the follow-on costs of filing a patent application. Patenting an invention can be a long and expensive

process, and some attorneys are reluctant to detail the full costs in case this deters clients. However, for your peace of mind, you should obtain estimates (in writing if possible), of all likely patent costs.

You should also be wary of attempting to file a patent application on your own behalf. Although effective in some cases, a badly written patent application can be disastrous in the long run. If you cannot afford the cost of a patent attorney, then it is usually best to delay pursuing your idea until you have sufficient resources to do so. You should also consider obtaining investors in your idea. Suitable investment early on in the life of an invention can mean the difference between success and failure. Be very careful about disclosing your idea to other people though. If done (except in confidence) before your patent application is filed, you could lose *all* rights to your idea.

RESEARCHING YOUR MARKET

Once you have filed your patent application you can disclose your idea in public. It is essential to do this, and to obtain an idea of the likely public response to your idea, before progressing further. A detailed market survey, assessing who is likely to buy your product, and for what price, is the best way of doing this. This information can be vital. If it seems likely that there is not a demand for it, then it may be best to abandon it, rather than spending more money on what may be a fruitless project. However, on the other hand, if the market is there, then you should persist with your idea!

MANUFACTURING

If you are convinced of the market for your product, then the only remaining steps are to manufacture and sell it. However, manufacturing your product can be very difficult. To manufacture a new product usually costs tens of thou-

sands of dollars, and most inventors cannot afford to spend this money themselves. Most inventors will thus contact existing manufacturers to attempt to convince them to manufacture their ideas.

Convincing a manufacturing company of the merits of your idea is usually a long and drawn out process. You must be able to persuade the manufacturing company that your idea is likely to succeed in the marketplace. Market research is of great benefit here, as is enthusiasm and detailed preparation. Talking a manufacturing company into manufacturing your idea is a little like attempting to get your first job – you are likely to be rejected at least once, but if you persist, there is no reason why you should not eventually succeed.

THE FINAL STEPS

Once your product is manufactured, then you are 90 percent of the way to making it a commercial success. The final step is to sell your idea to the public. The way in which you do this will depend on the product. For some products, contacting existing retailers of similar products is the simplest way to reach the widest possible market. Most retailers will require a commission of around 50 - 100 percent of the manufacturing price to sell products, so make sure that you have budgeted for this in your premanufacturing cost and profit calculations!

Alternatively, many other means of selling products exist. Advertising in the pages of magazines (such as GR) or newspapers which are read by your target market is often a simple and effective way of selling your product. Approaching local interest clubs, or contacting national organisations can also be effective. This is particularly so if you can clearly demonstrate the benefits of your invention. Creativity in both approaching manufacturers and in selling your product is as important as the initial creativity involved in developing your invention. A positive attitude and enthusiasm helps too – if you can be enthusiastic about your product you can convince others to be as well.

IS IT ALL WORTHWHILE?

The process of developing an idea, protecting it, approaching manufacturers, and then selling your idea to the public can seem daunting, especially to those of us who already live busy and full lives. It may seem easier simply to for-

get a new idea, or to reason that it is too expensive to protect your concept, and simply to get on with other things.

The unfortunate result of this thinking is that many good ideas go neglected. Often it is the people who can least afford it who neglect the most important ideas. Inventors need enthusiasm, persistence, energy, good advice, and most of all, perseverance! But with these qualities, and a little luck, anybody can make money from their ideas.

If you have had a novel idea, and if you thoroughly believe in its usefulness, then don't let it go to waste! Take action, work hard, and, over time, who knows how much money you are likely to make?

Alastair Duhs works for a large patent attorney firm based in New Zealand. GR readers can obtain free patent or marketing advice by sending an SAE to: Alastair Duhs, PO Box 47-515 Ponsonby, Auckland, New Zealand.

OLD-TIME GARDEN GOSSIP

Mum always put some mint leaves or lavender in her clothes drawers to keep away silverfish and make clothes smell nice.

Years ago, when a garden was not producing well, the custom was to dig in copper coins or pieces of tin as the ground was lacking in these minerals. Tin was often placed around citrus trees to help them thrive better and be more productive.

Certain fruit trees, such as mulberries and citrus, were grown in the fowl pens and grew and produced abundantly.

Herbs can be used for medicine, as insect repellents, to sweeten the smell of cupboards or clothes. They can be used in cooking, flavouring most anything, and still add colour to the garden.

To keep plants flowering, most flowering shrubs should have the old flower heads pulled off, if they are not cut for the house, as it encourages the bush to produce more abundantly.

Trees that were very slow growing had three or four copper nails hammered into the trunk.

by June Birkett



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ECONOMICAL COMFORTABLE CAMPER

by Jose Robinson, Wild Cattle Island, Qld.



After buying a Toyota Hilux four wheel drive utility some considerable time ago, we thought if we put a fixed canopy on the back we'd have a camping outfit which would be up off the ground for sleeping in inclement weather, and out of reach of snakes and other creepy crawlies as well. So, having purchased a suitable second-hand hard-top canopy, we proceeded to fit it out for camping.

The first job, after bolting the canopy to the vehicle, was to build two single bunks. We constructed these with a minimum width of 61 centimetres each. This left sufficient space between them for a small cupboard for clothes and such. This fitted snugly between the two bed heads. The frame for the bunks and cupboard we made from lightweight softwood with plywood, for lightness of handling when we needed

to remove them for general carrying. We often need the tray to carry loads of manure and other goodies for the garden. We also built the bunks with storage underneath where we could store foodstuffs, folding table and chairs for camping trips. The space left at the bottom end of each bunk was just large enough to fit a small two-burner stove (gas) on one side and a portable gas fridge on the other side.

A carpet strip of 57 centimetres wide fitted down the centre of the floor between the bunks, and one reading light would service both beds. A hanging gas light would service the dining area under an extended tarp for night use.

The final piece-de-resistance was a three-step ladder (surplus from our boating days) that fitted exactly in the space from ground level to truck tray.

This we secured with a strap to the back of one bunk when travelling.

You may well be wondering about headroom in the sleeping areas. Well yes, there is not sufficient room to stand upright inside the canopy, but after all, that area is only for sleeping in, so who needs headroom? For just the two of us, we've found the whole thing works well – no caravan or trailer to hassle with on the busy roads. We've had some wonderful weekend trips as well as a couple of two weeks duration. We've found it light, compact, and very comfortable.

Weight is always a consideration when adding anything like this to the back of any vehicle. If any off-road driving is anticipated, then things in the back must be lightweight with nothing loose to move around while travelling on rough ground. The aluminium canopy which we purchased was very light-

weight and usually stays fixed to the ute, with only the furnishing being moved in or out as required.

I sewed little pull-along curtains for the side windows and rear opening, plus matching mattress covers for the bunks. This was fabric I had in my sewing department, so was no added expense. We fitted a gauze fly-screened frame to the large back opening, which has proved its worth when we've camped in insect prone areas in the tropics.

To travel light, it's just a matter of not taking unnecessary junk. It's a matter of simplifying one's lifestyle to the basic necessities. We already live a fairly simple and uncluttered lifestyle, so our bare minimum canopy-camper suits us fine.

Anyone can fit out a ute for camping if they can saw a piece of wood and hammer in a nail.

BIODIVERSITY is the existence of a wide variety of plant and animal species in their natural environments. Biodiversity looks after us. We may not see it but biodiversity keeps our water drinkable, our air breathable, our soils fertile for growing food and our seas clean.

'Ironically, it is often not the big and beautiful creatures but the ugly and less dramatic ones we need the most.'

Douglas Adams, novelist

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ANIMAL SENSE

by John Mount, Woodford, Qld.

Human beings, by refusing to observe and learn from nature, frequently seem to be suffering from easily preventable illnesses. Animals don't appear to have this problem, perhaps they have little choice. Of course to animals, not to obey nature could mean death. Humans can rely on a trip to the doctor, a dose of antibiotics and, when cured, back again to doing the wrong thing.

Long ago before retiring for the night I would always open wide all the windows in the bedroom and upon rising the next morning I would often find I had one of four things: a sore dry throat, sniffles, congested lungs, or a raging cold. Upon further investigation, I realised that I was a mouth breather and the cool night air was going directly to the lungs instead of being conditioned first by the nose.

I then decided that during the early evening I would leave the windows wide open, filling the room with fresh air, then, upon retiring, I would leave them open only a few centimetres, enough to replace the used air and recirculate the rest. I also practised breathing through the nose until I could do it with little conscious effort. The results were markedly different - no more sore throats or running noses and only the occasional cold.

The women of some tribes in Africa, when they lie their infants down to sleep, prop up the child's head so that its chin is touching or is close to its chest. This makes breathing through the mouth difficult and teaches the child to breathe most-

ly through the nose.

The internal blood vessels of the nose are located close to the surface of the skin and when the air is drawn in over this area it is warmed, then by the time it reaches the lungs it is close to body temperature. The nose is also furnished with moist hairs to filter the incoming air, and of course the nose contains the sense of smell. The mouth can't tell you when you're breathing in bad or polluted air!

Now I know why chooks and our other feathered friends sleep with their beaks tucked in amongst their feathers. When they sleep, the warmth from their bodies circulates amongst their feathers so that they're breathing warm fresh air at all times. Foxes and some breeds of dogs with bushy tails will cover their faces with their tails and also breathe their own warmth. This is probably why other breeds of dog (minus bushy tails) sleep curled up nose to tail or with their nose close to their paws.

When an animal is sick it will refuse food until its health has improved. This is good sense. While the body is busy trying to cope with the illness and committing its reserves of energy to battling the problem the last thing it wants to do is waste valuable energy trying to digest food. Humans are different. They think that if they miss a meal something terrible is going to happen to them.

We would do well to observe nature and her multitude of life forms and try to learn some of their many healthy ways.

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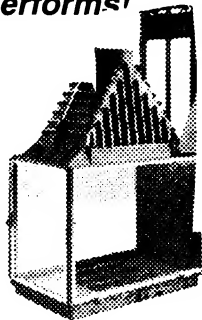
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SEMINOLE TRAVELLER'S PILLOW

by Pamela Odijk, Bribie Island, Qld.

Frequent travellers, especially those addicted to long distance coach or train travel, appreciate small comforts such as a pillow. This decorative pillow has been specifically designed with travellers in mind. It is an ideal gift and a sure-fire seller for fete and market stalls. It is decorative while still being comfortable to sleep on in transit, or to use as a back rest. Its velcro sealed opening not only keeps the pillow securely inside its cover at all times, but also serves as a convenient place to stash away your newspaper, magazine or book (often cumbersome and difficult items to stow away easily) when you are ready to alight.

Just tear open the velcro, place your magazines inside, lying flat against the pillow, and reseal the velcro. This is also an ideal place to quickly stow away a light shawl, or wrap. Then, when you are ready to alight, just pop the carry handle over your shoulder, leaving both hands free to cope with hand luggage and suitcase. It also doubles as a second pillow in your motel or hotel room.

The kind of decoration used on a traveller's pillow is entirely up to you – embroidery, applique, patchwork . . . The pillows pictured use the simplest of Seminole patchwork techniques alternated with simple strip patchwork, using calico as the main fabric. It is quick and easy (made in a few hours), is aesthetically pleasing to men and women, and enables you to make optimum use of small pieces of fabric. By being cheap to make it is a highly profitable item to sell. For full details on making Seminole patchwork, see GR 129.

MATERIALS

approximately 1 metre craft quality calico or denim

thread to match

Small amounts of scrap fabric similar in thickness to the calico if going to be combined with it, or cotton fabric all of similar thickness to make an entire front which can be backed (lined) with

similar material or calico if you wish, for added strength and neatness.

piece of velcro almost the length of the open side, approximately 43 cm

Size

Cut one (or two – second piece is for backing the front patchwork cover) calico approximately 70 cm x 50 cm plus seam allowances.

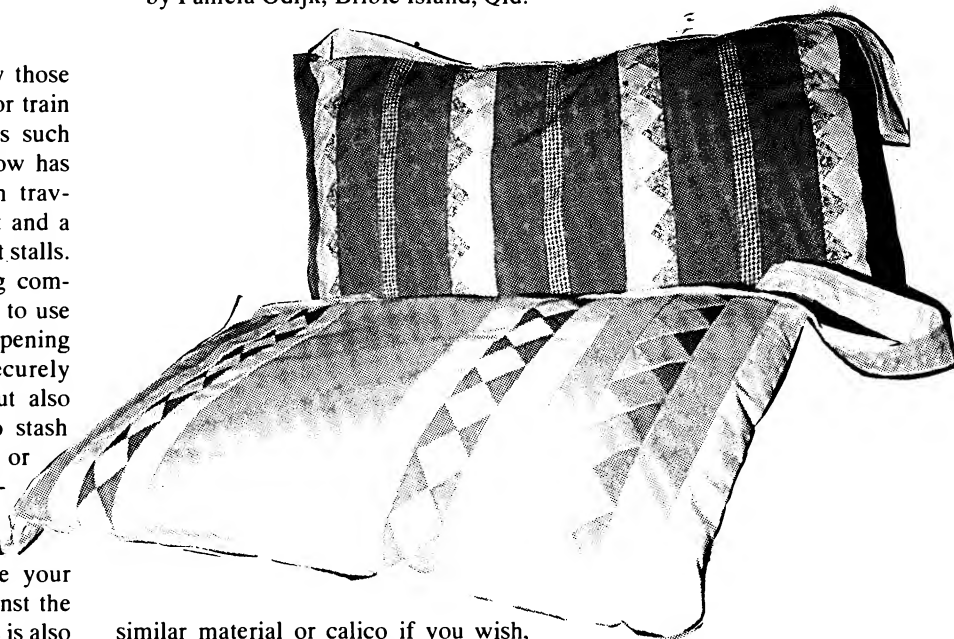
Cut one calico carry handle approximately 108 cm x 9 cm, seamed down one side, turned right side out and pressed.

Cut strips for Seminole patchwork and alternate pieces of stripping 5 cm wide. A rotary cutter makes this task much easier and cuts a straighter edge, but scissors will do.

METHOD

This simplest version of Seminole patchwork is pieced together as indicated in the first of the diagrams. More complicated versions using this technique can be invented – some are suggested in the diagrams (see GR129).

Arrange the patchwork pieces alternating with matching and contrasting strips either side of a centre piece, or arrange strips across the entire pillow case. Trim to size. Any leftover stripping can be used to trim other articles such as aprons.



To assemble, place the back calico piece right side to the bottom. On top of this place the front patchwork piece (right side down), and on top of this place the backing piece (right side facing up). Firmly pin all pieces.

Insert the carry handle so it will be sewn in with the seam near the end of one of the long sides between the front patchwork and back pillow piece.

Sew around the three closed sides of the pillow – then overlock or zigzag to neaten, making sure that all edges are firmly secured. Turn right side out.

Turn under hem on open side the



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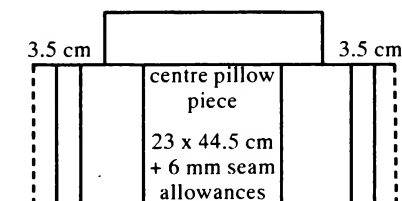
same width as the velcro stripping. Attach the velcro using a fine machine stitch along the top, then machine stitch the velcro and the hem into place.

Insert pillow and firmly seal the velcro edge. For market or fete stalls, always have one pillow cover displayed with a pillow inside and label it to explain its function.

Assembling Example

Seminole patchwork in 5 cm strips. Finished strip measures 4 cm. Then add 5 cm side strips to each side of Seminole strip. Whole band then measures approximately 12.75 cm, making allowances for seams.

Two Seminole bands with side strips sewn together = 23 x 44.5 cm + seam allowances of 6 mm



and hem turning where velcro strip is attached

For a neat inside appearance, cut a lining piece of corresponding size as well as a back for the pillow. Insert the carry handle while attaching the back.

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WHAT'S ON

Of special significance for September are the many activities being organised to celebrate National Biodiversity Month. If your local council or newspaper is not promoting activities in your area, call the Community Biodiversity Network (02-9380-7629) for information about events near you. Make a difference – be involved in protecting/conserving/regenerating our unique biodiversity.

NATIVE ORCHIDS

A free workshop and field trip on 11th September aimed at raising awareness of native orchids. For more information contact Anne Westwood, Friends of Bass Valley Bush Inc. Ph: 03-5678-8483.

DOWN BY TINGALPA CREEK

To celebrate National Biodiversity Month, Brisbane City Council & 'Adopt-a-Wetland' Coastcare Project are hosting a free breakfast, canoe trips and eco walks on 12th September. The place to be is Tingalpa Creek Reserve, Chadwell Street, Capalasa West from 8.30 to 11.00 am. For more information contact Ian Curtis on 0419-723-354.

ENVIRONMENTAL EXPO

This expo will take place on the 18th-19th September at both the Katoomba High and Primary schools. Frances Lawson-Cohen is the co-ordinator and can be reached on 02-4782-6079.

BIODIVERSITY ART EXHIBITION

This exhibition encourages local artists to display work depicting Australian native plants and animals found on the Eyre Peninsula. It is a free event during September at the Arterya Gallery, 28 Washington St, Port Lincoln, SA 5606.

MALLEE FOWL SURVEY

A survey of isolated remote localities in the Gnowangerup and Jerramungup Shires. To be conducted at the Peniup and Corockerup Reserves at various times. The State Manager of the Australian Trust for Conservation volunteers is Ken Beasley and he can be reached on 08-9336-6911 or 0417-742-310.

HAND WEAVERS AND SPINNERS EXHIBITION

The Hand Weavers and Spinners Guild of NSW will be holding the Loomcraft '99 exhibition at Hurlstone Agricultural High School from September 25th to October 1st. For more information about entries etc, contact Jenny Hopper on 02-6559-2889.

INTERNATIONAL LANDCARE CONFERENCE

Melbourne is hosting the world's first International Landcare Conference in March 2000. Brochure, including registration and conference details is available from Waldron Smith Convention Centre Network, ph: 03-9690-6744, or visit the Landcare 2000 Conference website at www.vic.gov.au/conf/landcare2000/

RENEWABLE ENERGY AND SUSTAINABLE LIVING FAIR

Going Solar's fair is on again in November 1999 – keep an eye out for the date and venue which will be announced shortly. Contact Stephen Ingrouille, ph: 03-9387-9844.

ROSEWEEK '99

Roseweek '99 is a celebration of the centenary of the Rose Society of Victoria. It will be held at the Royal Exhibition Buildings, Melbourne from October 29th until November 3rd. It will include an international rose show, a portraits of roses exhibition, a lecture programme and much more. For more information contact the Secretariat, C/The Conference Connection, 74 McPherson St, Essendon 3040. Ph: 03-9370-6470.

RARE POULTRY OPEN DAY

The Victorian Branch of the Australian Rare and Minority Breeds Association is holding an open day along the Mornington Peninsula on 22nd August. Two collections (with chooks, ducks and geese) will be visited and the historical background and special features of the breeds highlighted by guest speaker, Megg Miller. Bring a picnic or BBQ and meet new friends. Entry \$5 donation. Booking unnecessary but ring for directions. Ph: Melissa, 03-5989-2992 or Maryrose, 03-5983-2599.

WILD FOOD IN THE CITY

by Bec Lowe, Carnegie, Vic.

In the two square metres of ground directly outside my back door, I found eight species of edible plants. Four more were found in other parts of my suburban yard. A perusal of a nearby railway cutting revealed a few more. All these plants are fully self-seeded and totally uncultivated. Most people would regard them as weeds.

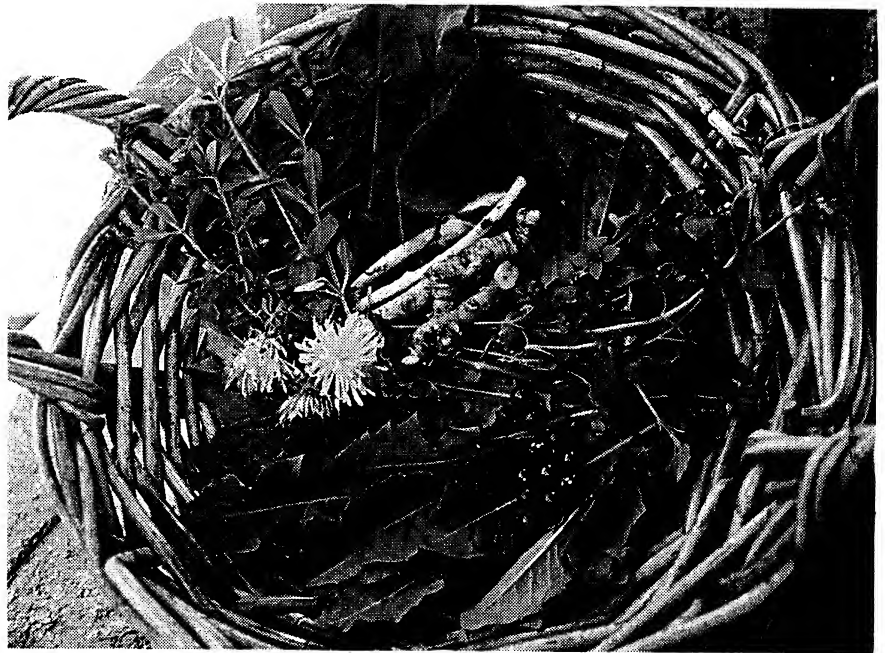
Ever since I picked up a library book on useful weeds, I have had a whole new perspective on my urban environment. A very short-term lease over winter, with the garden soon to be destroyed by a new building, ruled out any possibility of a vegie garden and I was resigned to buying all my food. Now I eat from my garden every day.

My favourites so far are the young leaves of chickweed, cat's ears and dandelions. They all grow close to the house and can be picked and used directly without further processing. They are wonderful added to salads, sandwiches and whatever is cooking. Chickweed in particular tastes very much like spinach. I'm never short of greens!

I have also been using cleavers, both as a cooked green and as a tea; nightshade berries; the young leaves of dock and milk thistle; dandelion roots as a tea; and small amounts of fennel, wood sorrel and dandelion petals as interesting additions to salads. You will no doubt find your own favourites in your area.

My two-year-old son Ezra has become almost as enthusiastic as I have, often bringing me handfuls of cleavers from the garden as a present. Kids love cleavers, as they can stick them on their clothes. Mind you, I have yet to see him eat any.

Now that I have started collecting wild plants I cannot understand why more people do not make use of this huge, virtually unexploited, resource. The benefits are enormous. In writing this I am hoping to inspire others to get out there and experiment and discover the joys of weeds for themselves. Like me, you will probably be surprised at how many edible plants there are around you.



Edible weeds from a suburban garden, clockwise from top: milk thistle leaves, dandelion roots, cats-ear leaves, chickweed, nightshade berries, dandelion leaves, dandelion flowers, cleavers.

Most of these weeds are extremely nutritious, often more so than cultivated vegetables. Wild plants have not been bred for such things as uniformity and keeping qualities at the expense of nutrition. Also, because they are mostly harvested directly before use, they retain far more of their nutritional value than anything that can be found in a shop.

Many of these weeds also have medicinal uses. Because they are so prolific and accessible they have been used in folk remedies for thousands of years. People pay big money for herbal teas, such as dandelion and nettle, that are probably growing within metres of where they live. I must admit I have been guilty of this many times.

One of the best things about harvesting weeds is that they are completely free. Although you probably won't be gathering enough to make a significant dent in your food bill, who could resist the offer of a free feed? It also makes environmental sense. Our society relies so much on food from distant places. Think of the waste involved in the transport of fresh

foods to our cities when a perfectly acceptable alternative exists here already. Furthermore, weeds grow without the addition of chemical fertilisers, pesticides or any other damaging agricultural practices.

The biggest benefits of harvesting and eating weeds, however, are much less tangible. There is something deeply satisfying in being able to harvest food from your own area. It allows us to gain a connection with the land, something that few people in cities are able to do. It also leads to a new awareness and appreciation of the surrounding environment. A simple walk to the local shops takes on a new dimension of looking, harvesting and appreciating. Urban environments are so often dismissed as grey and barren. What joy there is in watching weeds squeeze through every little crack!

We rarely consider the origins of anything we eat. We are able to walk into a shop and buy whatever food-stuffs we want and store them in the fridge until needed. People do not need to look for or even think about

food; it's all there in front of us when we walk into a supermarket, no questions asked. This supermarket-to-fridge mentality is a major reason why weeds are not utilised in our society. We are so conditioned to thinking that food comes from shops that we don't bother to look anywhere else.

Furthermore, there is a great stigma attached to weeds. Most people regard them as something to be pulled out, poisoned or otherwise destroyed. With these attitudes so pervasive in our society it is no wonder that it is so hard to turn around and not only appreciate them, but use them for food.

Another reason why people might not feel comfortable harvesting weeds is the perceived danger of poisoning. While there are certainly poisonous plants around, with a good guide, be it knowledgeable human or book, and a bit of common sense, there is little risk of misidentification. When describing each weed, a good guide book should also list similar-looking plants and their distinguishing features. I guess the golden rule is – if in any doubt whatsoever, do not eat it.

My only hesitation was with a specific type of plant. No matter how its praises are sung in the literature, it is not easy to eat the fruit of a plant that you have grown up calling deadly nightshade! This name is of course incorrect – the real deadly nightshade plant does not occur in Australia. A nightshade plant found in the Melbourne suburbs will be either glossy or blackberry nightshade, both with edible black berries.

I have only had one incident that came close to trouble. My mother told me that her chooks were not eating the chickweed in the back garden. I was surprised and frankly sceptical; it's called chickweed for a reason. I



was a bit shocked to find that the uneaten patches were spurge, a small plant that exudes a corrosive latex when picked. She had listened to me rave about chickweed and was wanting to use it herself! She wasn't using any guide, however, and once I pointed her towards some real chickweed in her front garden she was well able to see the differences.

Another problem I have encountered with trying to enthuse people to eat weeds is fear of contamination with city pollution. Though it would be common sense to avoid weeds growing right on a busy roadway, most wild plants in suburban areas would be no worse than vegies grown in the backyard. I think it comes back to this stigma attached to weeds. My housemate expressed doubts about eating the weeds from our garden for this reason, but I'm sure she would not have objected to a vegie patch.

While driving through the suburbs the other day I noticed a large commercial plantation of strawberries growing right next to the six-lane highway. I don't think we can necessarily assume that the food that reaches us via the shops is grown in a better place than the

local weeds are.

Collecting weeds thus shares many of the advantages of having your own vegie patch with only a fraction of the effort involved. The only work involved is in the harvesting, often the most rewarding part of growing food yourself. What's more you don't even need a garden, a big benefit for those in flats, units and unfavourable rental situations like mine. Of course if you find a weed that you enjoy in a different locality you might like to try cultivating it in your garden. But that is another story.

There is no space to give details on specific plants here. There would be little point anyway, the weeds common in your area are not necessarily those of suburban Melbourne. Nip down to your local library and research. Tim Low's, *Wild Herbs of Australia and New Zealand*, has become my weed collecting bible. There are many good publications on the identification of weeds for specific areas, although they rarely describe uses or even mention which ones are edible. Most herb books will give details of the medicinal and nutritional virtues of some of the plants you will be picking. Penny Woodward's, *An Australian Herbal*, has a very good section on wild growing herbs. *Wild Food In Australia* by AB & JW Cribb is another good source of information.

So go out and explore those vacant lots, railway cuttings, nature strips and gardens. Collecting and eating wild plants is free, fun and good for you. What more could you ask?

References

Wild Food in Australia 2nd ed, AB & JW Cribb (1990).
Wild Herbs of Australia and New Zealand, Tim Low (1985), Angus and Robertson; *An Australian Herbal*, Penny Woodward, Hyland House.

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Memories of Home Remedies

by Shirley Heale, Bundaberg, Qld.

As I wandered around the pharmacy, I marvelled at the vast array of bottles and boxes, jars and packets on display. Relief for every abnormal condition seemed to be provided. I stopped in front of the colon care section and smiled as a picture from long ago flashed through my mind: a picture of myself as a small child watching, grim-faced, the administration of castor oil to my baby brother. As my mother held him firmly on her lap with one hand, the fingers of her other hand clamped his nostrils shut. My father squeezed the sides of the little victim's mouth to force it open, then deftly tipped in a spoonful of oil. As the squealing, kicking, spluttering babe was released, I made a hasty retreat in case I was next.

We lived in a small country town without easy access to medical care. Home remedies, some very effective, many extremely unpleasant, were often brought into use.

I still wince as I recall the agony I endured when my father used the 'hot bottle' technique to bring a boil to a head. A wide-mouthed glass bottle was heated in hot water, then the mouth of the bottle was clamped over the boil. The heat trapped in the bottle caused a strong sucking action – and extreme hurt.

Splinters and festering sores were treated by any one of a number of poultices, each with dramatic 'drawing' powers, the most popular being soap and sugar, and bread soaked in water with the excess moisture squeezed out. However, nothing could beat the drawing and healing of Bates Salve, which our family referred to as 'black stuff'. This wax-hard stick of black magic, was held in one hand and a match flame applied to one end. The melting drops were caught on paper, then applied to the affected area. The timing had to be exactly right. Too long a wait and the salve would not stick, too soon and its application would elicit a yell of protest occasioned by scalded flesh.

Heating treatments featured prominently in these home remedies, such as hot salt wrapped in a cloth to soothe an aching tooth or ear. No help was avail-

able from a ray lamp for my father's bad back. Instead, my mother, acting on his instruction to, 'get the irons ready Mother', heated her Mother Potts irons on the wood stove, lay a sheet of brown paper on my father's broad back, then proceeded to iron his back, accompanied by his cries of 'lift it, lift it', when the heat became too intense. Follow-up treatment was a good sound rub with goanna oil. The wearing of a red flannel was recommended to prevent a recurrence.

As I was one of those unfortunates labelled as 'chesty', from my early years I wore a camphor bag, a square block of camphor encased in a little cloth bag and pinned inside my singlet. Many a night, my chest and back were vigorously rubbed with Vicks, the soothing vapours penetrating my respiratory tract as I slept. How I loathed the sticky feeling on my skin.

A more serious manifestation of my complaint called for a mustard plaster – powdered mustard and flour mixed to a paste, spread between two sheets of brown paper, then applied to my rib cage and left overnight. Too strong a mix played havoc with tender skin, resulting in blistering.

My frequent fevers and chills were treated by my father's own special medication. He would appear at my bedside with a mug containing rum in hot water sweetened with sugar and the instruction, 'Here, child, drink this. It'll sweat it out of you'. And sweat it out of me it did.



Green-ant bites never failed to succumb to the dark, sticky, tarry substance on the stem of my father's pipe when it was unscrewed at the middle. Nicotine does have some beneficial uses. Wasp stings, and others of a like nature, found relief when dabbed with a wet 'blue bag' from the laundry.

As a schoolchild, I was not immune to the usual childhood afflictions, but the appropriate home remedy was always available. Iodine was used for ringworm, zinc ointment for school sores, pumpkin seeds for threadworms.

That horror of horrors, head lice, was overcome by saturating the scalp and hair with kerosene (no smoking, please). Any surviving 'crawlies' could be combed out with a fine-toothed comb. A last resort was complete shaving of the scalp.

The curse of teenage years, acne, required the daily ingestion of sulphur and syrup.

Diarrhoea, commonly referred to as 'the runs', was quickly controlled by a common garden weed we called 'cidaratusa'. The correct dosage, one leaf only, must be strictly adhered to. An overdose, and you ran the risk of 'never going again'.

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BABY CARE ON A BUDGET

by K Lock, Hervey Bay, Qld.

There is always much said about how expensive it is to raise a child. If you give in to all the latest trends and fads, then it is bound to be just that. Since my child is just a toddler yet, I can't comment too much on older children, but I do know that we did without a lot of so-called essentials with no ill-effect to our baby. There are many products on the market for babies and I believe that a lot of them are just an added expense you can do without.

Here are some tips I've found useful:

- A change table is definitely not a necessity. The bed or the floor will do just as well.

- Buy a lay-back stroller and it will last baby right through, instead of buying a pram first and then later having to buy a stroller.

- Disposable nappies are a definite no-no for the environment and also very costly.

- You don't need special nappy buckets. A normal bucket will do the job. Just use three if you find them too small.

- For nappy wipes buy lots of cheap washers or hem some suitable material - much kinder on bottoms and the environment.

- Use fluffy pilchers instead of plastic pilchers. They let baby's skin breathe and help prevent nappy rash.

- Socks and shoes are unnecessary unless it's cold and it is recommended that babies go bare foot where possible.

- Buy pilchers and singlets in unisex colours so they can be passed on to

other babies.

- Make your own cot mobile out of felt shapes and interesting objects.

- If you can sew, you can save heaps of money on baby clothes. They are quick, use very little fabric, and with a little imagination you can create a whole wardrobe. I make T-shirts, skivvies, shorts, trousers for 50 cents and tracksuits for \$2. You could also run up cot sheets out of sheets you might already have. It doesn't matter what they look like.

- Highchair, cot, playpen, bassinette etc: If money is tight, buy second-hand. They are often better quality than the plastic junk that is available in the shops.

- Freeze small portions of suitable meals where possible rather than buying prepackaged baby food.

- Baby does not need juices, Ribena, cordial and other sweet drinks. It is better that he/she drinks water and gets to like it and just has the occasional treat. Buy a nonspill drinker with straw and take water with you everywhere.

- Teething rusks are often wasted and are laden with salt to make them hard. Try a plain biscuit (shredded wheatmeals are good).

- I have had no success with gum soothing ointments during teething but a moistened cold washer was gratefully received and sucked on for ages.

- Toys: I firmly believe that most babies would rather play with a bucket of pegs or plastic kitchen containers

than with most toys that are available. Just buy a few basics and use your imagination.

These are just a few of the ways you can save money and help our environment. Don't let yourself be fooled into thinking you are depriving your child by not buying all the latest gear. Love and attention mean everything, while material possessions will soon be forgotten.

Note: if buying second-hand nursery furniture ensure items comply with current Australian safety standards. Older styles sometimes have unsafe features and components.

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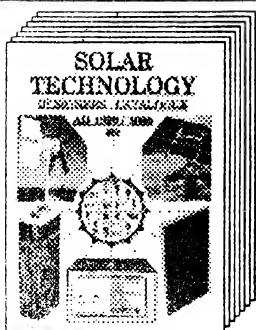


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RUDOLF STEINER EDUCATION

by Robert Martin, Warranwood, Vic.

The need for imagination, a sense of truth and a feeling of responsibility – these are the three forces which are the very nerve of education. Rudolf Steiner

Teachers in Rudolf Steiner (Waldorf) schools strive to educate children in an atmosphere of human love, of preparation for good and noble deeds, of penetrating thinking.

We wish our children to feel that they are free in essence, that they love the world and that they are eager to assume responsibilities in the community of adults. Our work lies in helping the children develop their thought-life, deepen and broaden their feelings, and harness their energy for the good of the world. We base our work upon a reverence for the divine individual that is within the child.

AGES OF GROWTH

We strive to help each age of growth be fully and vividly enjoyed and experienced. We do this by using art as a practice and language to develop the feelings and by nourishing the children with the rich heritage of wise folk tales, histories, fairy stories, poems, music and games that are part of world civilisation. These create the cultural atmosphere in which we teach the children reading, writing, arithmetic, nature study, geography, science, languages, music and other subjects. We do not wish to rush the children into adult consciousness, but allow them to savour their childhood.

As the children grow into teenagers, the intellectual content of their school work and the demands

made upon their critical thinking increase. Whereas younger children are encouraged in their creativity through art and play and a general cultural milieu, the older children are taught to strive to produce works of writing, thinking, speech and art which will display their individual creativity. They rise to this challenge at a time when there is a strong development in self-consciousness and critical thinking.

ATTITUDE OF WONDER

In our work with children we strive to engender an attitude of wonder for other people, for living creatures and for the structure of the physical world around us. Although the curriculum itself includes an immersion in the historical development of devout thought through prehistory and history, our conclusion is not that we should

involve the children with any particular religion, but rather that we may distil from this study a sense for the holiness and spiritual origin of all creation.

Each subject in our curriculum, be it history or mathematics, offers the opportunity of helping the student find another doorway through which to walk in rich appreciation of our world. Steiner teachers strive to awaken their own sense of joyous adventure in each topic they prepare to teach, regarding the world as an intelligent and universally moral stage upon which human beings act out their own lives.

RUDOLPH STEINER

Rudolf Steiner (1864-1925) was an Austrian philosopher, scientist and humanitarian who has profoundly influenced Western culture. He worked with scientist, artists, doctors, ministers of religion, teachers and industrialists to help transform our civilisation. In Australia, Rudolf Steiner's work is known in the form of Steiner education, biodynamics (agriculture and gardening), Anthroposophical medicine and architecture. Rudolf Steiner drew his inspiration from revelations of the spiritual world which he explored as a scientist of the spirit. He named his path of knowledge Anthroposophy, or The Wisdom of Human Being, and his path involves a simultaneous discovery of the self and the world.



Class one at the Melbourne Rudolf Steiner school performing a recorder event concert.

Steiner (Waldorf) schools have grown to number more than 600 in 40 countries around the world, including 40 schools and kindergartens in Australia and the movement continues to grow.

STAGES OF SCHOOLING

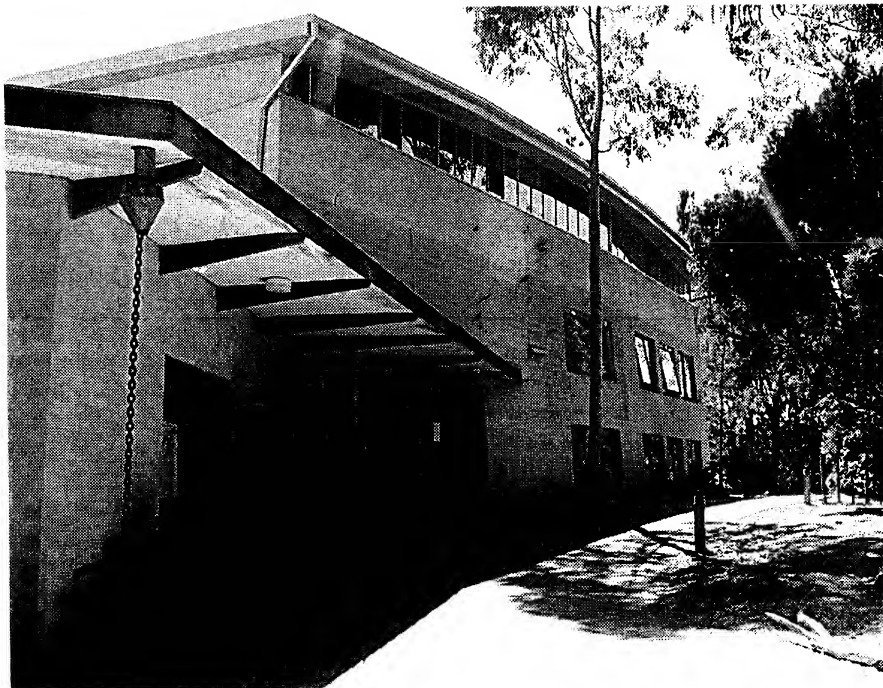
The Kindergarten

When our children first leave family life and enter kindergarten they meet a broader world of human types and activities which makes a deep impression upon their naive souls. We would wish them to see the many practical activities of home life given dignity and significance so we bring the children into an environment where cooking, cleaning, gardening and home activities, drawing, singing, playing with one another through their mutual interests are all practised in a sanctuary dedicated to the beautiful life of childhood. We could regard the kindergarten years as a time when the child moves into the daily practices and social customs of the wider community which they have chosen as their own. We strive to make the kindergarten a beautiful place: the forms of the buildings; the colours of the walls, the furnishings and toys; the quality of life which enters the rooms; and the gardens themselves are all regarded as significant influences upon the children.

The kindergarten teachers are acutely aware that not only their outer words and actions are influential upon the children, but also their inner love and reverence for the world and the children are a vital influence upon the developing souls of these young children who have come to them on their journey of life. Rhythm, seasonal awareness, festivals, and most of all the great stories of our culture provide material for our everyday work in the kindergarten. We give our children to the kindergarten wishing to see them enter a journey of loving guidance by creative teachers.

The Primary School

This is a time of adventure and delight for the children. They are led through the history of the world as they move from class to class. In the earliest classes our work is centred around the mythical consciousness of Earth's earliest people. Then year by year we develop our work from the themes of the Celtic world, the ancient mid-Eastern civilisations, the northern European mythologies, the classical



Melbourne Rudolf Steiner School at Warranwood, the only Steiner school in Victoria that goes to year 12, although there are others throughout Australia.

Greek consciousness. Eventually, as we come towards the high school, the power of the Roman legal and philosophical structures which enshrined the rights of the citizen and formed a basis for the developments of Renaissance human being, is examined.

Weaving through the primary years are the beautiful and profound influences taken from the wise cultures of the East and our own Aboriginal people. Each day our students are given pictures from the wonderful stories and histories of humanity. At first they meet the beings of fairy-tale myth that are externalised pictures of their own inner growth processes. Then as they move past the class one and two stages they begin to meet historical figures who can give them examples of loving human behaviour and the intelligence and strength of fine human deeds. The child's life in primary school is permeated with the pictures of the striving of individual humans to help one another and to help transform the world. These pictures inspire teachers and pupils alike, and we spend our days in the grandeur of the light they shed upon our lives.

The children's literary skills, their mathematical ability, their work with foreign languages, their physical dexterities are all developed in an orderly programme which emphasises the equal importance of thinking, deep vital feelings and steady responsible

will, using the mediums of art, music and poetry in all our activities.

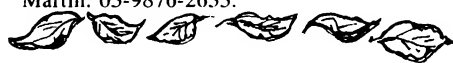
The Secondary School

The secondary school finds its meaning in helping the students create their own path into the great disciplines of humanity: art, geography, history, language, literature, mathematics, music, physical culture and science.

The students are brought to these areas of human striving by people who love their subjects and are avidly exploring and developing them. So the young people come to share enthusiasm for the broad disciplines of human culture. In years 11 and 12 they select from among these subjects those that they wish to explore in greater depth.

The Victorian Certificate of Education is therefore an exciting endeavour in which our students experience very rewarding and challenging years leading to fulfilment of their unique capacities. We do not attempt to push any student beyond their academic abilities but we do strive to provide them with the opportunity to achieve as great a success as is appropriate to their own interests and abilities.

Each Steiner school is autonomous and different schools progress to different levels. For more information and details about your nearest Steiner school call Tricia Martin: 03-9876-2633.



THE BUSH GARDEN

PLANNING AND PREPARATION

by Dorothy Creevey, Old Bonalbo, NSW.

A bush style garden is a good choice for a garden as it can be low maintenance and environmentally friendly. It is for the busy person, or someone mindful of the need to keep indigenous plants in their right environment, or it could be for someone who simply wants to enjoy the local wildlife. In this article we will look at the steps necessary to design and build such a garden. These suggestions would of course apply to any style of garden with the main difference being in the choice of plants.

The bush garden is an attempt to re-create or imitate the natural bushland, particularly the type of bush indigenous to a single locality. It looks as if it is part of its surroundings. Use as many plants and materials that are indigenous to the area as possible. Indigenous species are better for your conditions and should be better able to withstand the extremes of local weather. They will also attract more local wildlife. There is also less chance of creating a problem with escapees that naturalise in the bush. Even other non-indigenous natives can become pests.

Anyone can design their own garden, provided they think it through initially. You should take a piece of paper and list your garden requirements, such as, service, entertainment and play areas, views and atmosphere. Map out your block on the biggest piece of graph paper you can. Mark any fixtures such as buildings, fences, overhead wires, pipes, views and existing trees or plants you wish to keep. Mark any service or entertainment areas and north, south, hot/cold winds etc. It would also be a good idea to mark different soil conditions, such as wet or dry areas, to enable you to choose plants suited to those conditions later. Now, place a clear overlay over the plan, onto which you can mark any proposed plantings.

Think about what type of plantings would best suit individual areas. Take into account the growth habits of chosen plants, such as, height, width, invasive roots etc. Don't forget their preferred growing conditions. Choose plants that screen for service areas, perfumed ones



A small section of a suburban rainforest garden, less than three years old.

for walkways and entertainment areas, and colourful or bird attractant ones for areas viewed from a window. Windbreaks on bad weather sides are worthwhile if you have the space. Plant deciduous trees where you want summer shade and winter sun. Remember not to plant a tall tree in front of your solar hot water panels.

A garden with lots of different levels and curving pathways leading to different areas is more interesting and has the illusion of being larger than it actually is. Play around until you draw up something you like. Flowers are important, but remember that space, light, bark textures and colour, berries, nuts, leaves and birds are equally important in bush gardens.

IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS

Fragrant Plants

When looking for fragrant plants pick a leaf from plants growing in the bush around you, crush it in your hand and sniff. Some suggestions are:

- native mint bushes
- *Grevillea curviloba*
- blueberry ash
- native orchids
- tea trees (*Leptospermum* spp)
- *Melaleuca* spp

- wattles (*Acacia* spp)
- bottlebrushes (*Callistemon* spp)
- boronias
- banksias

Texture

The texture of the different barks and trunk shapes can be as interesting as the flowers of some of the trees and shrubs. Some suggestions are:

- the myrtles
- paperbarks
- Queensland bottle tree
- palms
- grass trees
- tree ferns
- kurrajong
- bottlebrushes

Colour

Colourful flowers need not be exclusive to exotic gardens. Here are some suggestions:

- the many everlasting flowers
- kangaroo paws
- mat rush (*Lomandra longifolia*)
- Christmas bulbs
- holly flame pea
- native orchids
- native bulbs
- banksias
- NSW waratah

- Geraldton wax

Ground Cover and Edging

Some suggestions for great ground covers and path edges.

- cut-leaf daisy
- yellow buttons
- kidney weed
- austral crane's bill
- native violet
- native pennyroyal
- native mints
- native ferns

Atmosphere

Atmosphere can be created with the smell of the bush, the feel of bark, a natural looking pond, the sound of birds, or a small re-created rainforest. There is nothing to equal walking or sitting in a rainforest. To quote Bill Mollison: 'Use all your senses as an instrument, try to be fully conscious both of specific details, sensations, and the total ambience of the site.'

Infrastructure

Drainage, water and lighting are important and need attention before planting begins. Built-in DIY watering systems are not too expensive and save time and water. They are well worth the money. Try to match any paving and other construction material colours with the colour of your soil or plants, as it will give a uniform spacious look.

CHOOSING SPECIES

There is a large range of native plants available now. For advice go to the library, local nursery (preferably special-

ising in natives), or your friendly gardening neighbours. Your local council may be worth a call also. They may be able to recommend what indigenous plants to grow and which plants to avoid, as there are many escapees from other gardens naturalising in the bushlands.

When choosing plants for a small garden, some indigenous plants are best avoided. Eucalypts are not a good choice for a small garden in my opinion. They shed branches in dry times, the blossoms of some attract flying foxes that can be very noisy, and cicadas can also be unbearable in the summer. Some have high oil content that makes them more combustible and many make the understorey environment uncomfortable for other plants growing under them. If you choose to plant eucalypts, I recommend you do a little research. Talk to a knowledgeable nursery person or your local Forestry Department about your choices.

This doesn't mean that you can't have an Australian garden, there are many other native shrubs and trees to choose from. There is a huge variety of acacias (wattles), bankias, callistemons (bottlebrushes), casuarinas (she oaks), grevilleas, hakeas, leptospermum (tea trees), melaleucas (paper barks), lillypillies, palms, pines etc etc.

Don't overlook the native grasses, ferns, vines, epiphytes, and any other tiers there are in your area. Try to stay with indigenous plants if you can and be aware that there are many non-natives out there

in the bush that you don't want to put in your garden, lantana for example.

I would suggest you walk around some undisturbed native bush close to where you live, observing what is growing there from trees to ground cover. These would possibly be your best choices. If you are looking for plants suited to a north, south, east or western exposure, look at what is growing naturally in that situation and try to emulate it. Do the same with full sun, shady, wet and dry areas.

Don't be tempted with too much diversity. A group of the same plants in one area looks far more natural than a mixed planting. One exception being the silky oak – no more than one every 20 metres should be planted, as they have a tendency to kill each other if planted any closer.

Look at the good and the bad of your plant choices. For example, planting a lillypilly near a pathway or over the children's sandpit might be messy when the fruit is falling. A chook yard would be a better position. The chooks would soon make short work of the messy problem. A bird-attracting plant near the clothesline would be visually pleasing, but may leave you with soiled washing. The same specimen planted outside your dining room window would give great pleasure. Some plants could even assist with your security; planting a prickly specimen under a window may be an effective burglar deterrent.

Plant deciduous trees and vines on the north and north-east sides of your house to allow you to benefit from the



For edging use whatever is available on site, in this case sections of fallen logs.

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Remember the wildlife in your garden planning: hollow logs for lizards to hide out in, shallow ponds for frogs and birds, nectar-producing flowers for the honeyeaters.

sun in winter and shade in summer. There are not a lot of deciduous natives so you may have to use the odd exotics here, so why not make them deciduous fruit trees. If you are planning a palm and fern grove, the south side is the place for it. A windbreak is desirable on the storm side and the west side, as they can be hot/cold and windy.

To obtain your plants you have a choice of purchasing or propagating them yourself. Most natives aren't hard to grow from seed or cuttings. Don't break any laws while obtaining your plants. It is illegal to take plants from a forest without a license. In my experience most natives appear to do better when planted out at tube size.

A good permaculture principle is that every plant must perform three worthwhile functions to deserve a

place in your garden. Leguminous plants (wattles are one), for example, return nitrogen to the soil. Bird-attracting plants provide visual pleasure and attract insect-eating birds for insect control. Other plant uses to keep in mind are shade, play structures for kids, mulch production (eg silky oak), perfume, beauty, fruit, flowers, animal food, preservation of endangered species.

Do some research, there are many helpful books around that you could buy or borrow. By now you hopefully have a good idea of what you would like and where you would like it. You have done your research, begged, bought or propagated your plants and seeds and are ready for the hard yakka.

In the next issue we really get down to work in the garden.



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A HOLE IN THE GUMBOOT

WE RETURN

by Lyn Rudling, Forth, Tas.

We are some of the lucky ones. We did, eighteen months after our departure, return to our 'dream' block of land at Forth. We could not stay away. We were drawn back to the quiet and the small joys of everyday life. We have promised ourselves no new animals to play with for six months. To work we must go!

We returned at the start of spring. Our tenants were not gardeners of the soil – the weeds were knee-high, but what a joy to return where we belong. Out came the garden fork, the garden spade, and the sunscreen for our backs.

But, a good surprise! Under those lush green weeds the soil was even better than when we left. Worms sported and wriggled and here and there some unidentifiable item was mouldering away happily. Some ornamental plants had really taken off

without my enthusiastic pruning.

Big plans are now underway and even though we are tired we somehow feel twice as alive. My husband and I have a different attitude now. We realise it does not all have to be done in one day or even two. There is almost forever to hatch our dreams (and our chickens), our plans can be changed if they prove too demanding. There is now time to sit in the sun and watch the birds flying up their highway.

The block forgives us for leaving and is still here – richer than before for all the mulches and food we gave it in those early years. Our first seeds are breaking through the mix – how proud and reassured we feel. *You* can take a break if it all becomes too much, or you are called away for a time. The land will still be waiting, still there tomorrow when you feel refreshed and



ready to start again. Sure, there is a hole in the gumboot, but what the heck – it lets the air in and there is more room to wriggle your toes.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

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"The 'Gift of Heaven' from
the High Country"

SUE'S SUPERB CONGEE

by John Holland, Flinders, Vic.

As I have problems with food sensitivities, the delights of good food have at times seemed an ever-dimming memory. However, over the last few years my wife Sue has been able to come up with some treasures that would tickle the most fastidious gourmet's fancy and yet still meet my constraints. One of the best of these is Rice Congee. I first heard of congee when living in Beijing, where it is the traditional breakfast food. My language teacher lamented that the pace of life was so busy these days that no one had time to make congee. As she said this her eyes glazed over with the faraway look that comes from the most pleasant of childhood memories.

Congee is basically rice soup, but it is so good, so warming, so delicious and comforting that it is difficult to believe that it is made from rice at all. It is also much too good for breakfast, and is best as a filling winter soup for lunch or dinner. As a late night supper it is unbeatable. On top of all this, it is cheap. It has been used for centuries as the Chinese equivalent of our chicken broth, but is far more nutritious.

One of its greatest assets, and a very useful one for those with food sensitivities, is its flexibility. There is no need to fatally compromise a recipe through lack of a vital ingredient. Basically, if you can eat rice, any meat, fish or any vegetables, you can make congee well.

Because congee has such simple ingredients it is crucial to ensure that only best quality meat or vegetables are used as they provide flavour to the meal. Even so, the main ingredient can probably be rescued from what you might have to date been throwing away!

Different types of congee have quite distinctive characteristics. In fact, the Chinese use congee as a health tonic. Paul Pitchford's, *Healing with Whole Foods*, lists 33 common congees and their health effects. My current favourites are Chicken Congee and Vegetable Congee. Their flavours are so distinct

from each other that they are very different meals. Making congee takes a little forward planning, but the result is well worth it.

THE NEED FOR REAL STOCK

For Chicken Congee you will need chicken stock, and for Vegetable Congee vegetable stock. No, not that stuff that masquerades as stock on the supermarket shelf, but the real thing. This is essential to the recipe and cannot be substituted. If you have never cooked with real stock before then this will be the start of great things for you! (Just try risotto using real stock next time.)

Chicken Stock

The day before you want your congee, take the best quality chicken that you can find and afford. I use free-range organic birds for the best flavour. You will need one large or two smaller birds. Trim all the useable chicken pieces off the bird and use them for that night's dinner, saving the cooked chicken breasts for the next day's congee.

While cooking your chicken dinner, place the chicken that you would normally discard; skin, neck, bones, giblets, into a large pot. Add chopped onions, garlic and ginger. Cover well with water and bring to the boil. Turn down to a simmer and cover. It's important to cook it for a long time in order to extract the best from the ingredients, about three hours. The long cooking time is the difference between bland, watery stock and the real thing. Check occasionally to ensure that the pot retains enough water and doesn't boil dry. Skim the surface occasionally.

When the stock has cooled enough

to handle easily, strain off the fluid into a bowl. Cover and allow to cool fully before placing in the fridge overnight. When cold you can skim the solidified fat from the surface and discard it. If you don't intend to use the stock the next day, it freezes well.

VEGETABLE STOCK

Vegetable stock is even easier to make. The exact ingredients are dependent on what you have to hand, using what is abundant in the garden at the time. Typically, include several onions, a couple of tomatoes, leeks, celery, a handful of garlic cloves, some parsley and root vegetables. Halve the tomatoes and onions and fry in good quality oil until dark brown. Put a small quantity of oil in a large pot and add the roughly chopped vegetables, sweating them for several minutes. Add plenty of water and slowly bring to the boil. Skim the surface. Cover and simmer for three hours. Allow to cool. Strain the fluid and discard the vegetables.

THE CONGEE

With the stock ready, the preparation of congee is almost complete. However, it needs two hours of slow cooking, with only occasional stirs, to be at its best. I have read recipes from good cooks which suggest less, but they obviously haven't experienced the real thing. This is not something you can get at a fast food joint!

Take the stock from the fridge. Remove and discard any fat that may have formed a crust on the surface of the chicken stock. Take one and a half cups of calrose rice and wash three times before placing in a large pot. Add the stock and top up with water, making the fluid about two and a half times the volume of the rice. Bring to the boil, cover and simmer, stirring occasionally. Keep an eye on the water level and top up with hot water if necessary. A consistency of thick soup is the goal. As the rice cooks it will become more glutini-



nous, and although it looks as though individual grains remain they will be indistinguishable in texture from the thick, delicious fluid which surrounds them. As the time for the meal approaches chop spring onions, chilli and coriander. If making Chicken Congee, shred the cooked chicken from last night. This involves tearing the cooked chicken with your fingers until it is small enough to be a delicate addition to the soup, rather than a lump of meat. It's obvious when you try.

To serve, place some of the uncooked ingredients, along with the cooked shredded chicken, in the bottom of a bowl and ladle over the congee. Fold in and serve. Add the remainder of the ingredients as and when desired, using the chilli sparingly. Superb!



Ingredients for Chicken Congee

Serves two adults and two children.

chicken stock made from:

- 1 or 2 chicken carcasses
- onions
- 2-4 garlic cloves

a large piece of fresh ginger, chopped
2 chicken breasts, cooked and shredded

Ingredients for Vegetable Congee

vegetable stock made from (for example):

- couple of leeks
- couple of celery stalks or half a celeriac
- few onions
- couple of tomatoes
- 2-4 garlic cloves
- 1 carrot
- parsley and other herbs
- water
- olive oil (for sweating vegetables)

All Congee

- 1 1/2 cups calrose rice
- coriander
- spring onions
- 1 chilli

You can also make congee using shortgrain brown rice, which is especially good for nursing mothers. For brown rice extend the cooking time to four to six hours.

Reading

Healing with Whole Foods – Oriental Traditions and Modern Nutrition, Paul Pitchford, 1993, North Atlantic Books, Berkeley Ca.

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CATALOGUE ON REQUEST

HEALTHY HENS

LEARNING THE HARD WAY

by Jill Brown, Levin, NZ.

My first foray into keeping hens was a total disaster. At the time, I was suffering from a decided lack of funds, so foolishly took on the remnants of a university experimental flock at (as I thought) no cost. These sad creatures seemed to succumb to one problem after another and laid only a few eggs in their short lives. The vet bills would have kept me in eggs for several years!

The second attempt, some years later, met with a little more success. These hens were two-year-old battery culls, their laying life supposedly over. They spent the first few days in their new home learning to walk! Accumstomed to a wire cage underfoot, they had difficulty standing on a normal surface. Grass was an astonishment to them, and they never quite came to grips with the idea that grasshoppers and snails were for eating.

Although the hens eventually laid quite well, they had some strange habits, and were never at home in their lovingly constructed house. They would hold on to their eggs until let out in the afternoon, then hide them in such inaccessible places as the middle of a blackberry bush! At dusk, unless rounded up and herded into their house, the birds would flutter into the nearest shrub and shiver through the frostiest night.

A decade on, moving to a country house, I found a strongly built hen



house in a corner of the orchard. That was enough to set me off again. This time I bought some lovely red point-of-lay pullets from a free-range breeder. These hens not only knew how to walk, and what their perches were for, but would come running for their food when called, and *always* laid their eggs in the nesting boxes.

Starlings had nested in the hen house for several years before my arrival and it wasn't long before my glossy red beauties were showing unmistakable signs of both lice and some sort of internal parasite. Over the years I had become com-

mitted to a more natural way of life. The challenge now was to find a way of dealing with these nasties without resorting to harsh worm treatments and clouds of toxic powders.

Some hurried but thorough research ensued. The result was two remedies which I still use today. The first, that wonder plant – garlic. The cloves I put in the drinking water were so popular that they were gobbled up by the nearest hen. I tried crushing it through their food. This got rid of the worms, but used huge amounts of garlic to ensure all birds got a dose. Wanting a method of supplying a lower dose to prevent recurrence I found a small, lidded, plastic container and nailed holes all over it. Into this went two or three peeled garlic cloves. The container was then submerged into the drinking water and the garlic replaced weekly. This method worked a treat.

Lice were also banished. One drop of Lugol's Iodine Solution (your local chemist can mix this up for you – *never* use pure iodine), in two tablespoons of apple cider vinegar, also added weekly to the drinking water, did the trick.

These two simple remedies, along with the basics of good hygiene, correct diet, and a daily opportunity to forage on fresh ground, keep my current flock in the peak of health. Not to mention an egg basket overflowing with their tasty offerings.

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PAIN TIN CHICKEN FEEDER

by Michelle Edwards, Aitkenvale, Qld.

Many of us have poultry of some kind and in this throw-away society recycling can be most rewarding. Not only do we reduce litter but the recycled chicken feeder is cheap and functional. The items necessary to construct such a feeder are easily found in most backyards. Or, if your backyard is heaps tidier than mine, are easily obtained from any painter or garage.

MATERIALS

The things that are needed are: an empty 10 litre paint tin, the type with the wire handle is best; an empty 20 litre oil drum; one small bolt with nut and washer. A little paint to tizzy up the finished product is a good idea but not essential.

Preparation

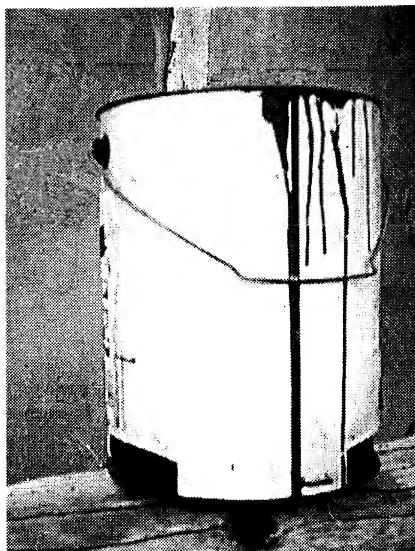
Once you have your items for recycling it's a good idea to clean them up before you start. Scrape out any dry paint left in the tin then wash it out with warm soapy water. Any paint firmly adhered to the tin will only serve to protect it from rust. Drain out any oil left in the drum then rinse the drum with hot water and detergent. Once the drum has been cut open you will be able to wipe away any traces of oil with a rag.

CONSTRUCTION

Mark the oil drum six and a half centimetres up from the bottom. Do this all the way around the drum so you have a clear line to cut on.

Using tin snips, a hacksaw or an angle grinder, cut the drum around your mark. The short piece of the drum, with some further work, now becomes the bottom of our feeder.

At this stage the edge of the drum will be sharp, so be careful. Take a pair of multigrips and turn over about half a centimetre of the edge. Turn it in towards the bottom of the drum. The easiest way to do this is to grip the edge with pliers and push the handle of the pliers towards the bottom of the drum. This will bend the edge inwards. It is then a simple matter to place the



Paint tin with holes cut in bottom.



Paint tin sitting in cut-down oil drum.



The finished feeder in use.

outside* edge against a block of wood and tap the turned edge flat against the side with a hammer.

Once you have done this, make sure there are no sharp pieces of steel left sticking out to catch unsuspecting poultry beaks on. Put this piece to one side until it is needed.

Next take the paint tin and make three marks on the outside of it. Each mark to be roughly one-third of the way around the tin. These marks are placed at the bottom of the tin and show where to cut out the holes for the feed to run through. Mark out a rectangle along the bottom of the tin, 13 centimetres long and three centimetres high at each of these points on the side.

Using a hacksaw or angle grinder (the angle grinder is easier), carefully cut out each rectangle.

Make a diagonal slot five millimetres long in both top corners of each rectangle and cut horizontally in both bottom corners so the sharp edges can be turned over to make a smooth edge. Use the same method as before to turn the edges.

Now all that remains is to join together the top and tray of the feeder. Place the paint tin in the centre of the tray and drill a hole through the centre of both pieces. The easiest way to do this is to invert the paint tin so that the tray sits on top of it. Mark the centre then drill a hole to suit the size bolt you have.

Put the bolt through the hole and tighten it up. You now have a chicken feeder ready to be painted. It can be hung up by the handle or stood on the ground. When the feeder is filled, replace the lid on paint tin to keep dirt out.

This feeder can be made larger or smaller to suit individual need by varying the size of the tins used.

POSTAGE PLEASE

We remind readers sending in requests for information to include an appropriate SAE. This also applies to people sending in material that they want returned.

BIODIVERSITY TURNING POINT

by Mary Horsfall, Longwood East, Vic.

September is National Biodiversity Month when, across Australia, we will be celebrating our rich biological diversity. Community groups and individuals are being encouraged to actively participate in biodiversity conservation.

Since the *State of the Environment Report* in 1996 named loss of biodiversity as, 'perhaps our most serious environmental problem,' conservation programmes have achieved a higher profile.

Biodiversity can be defined as the total variety of all life forms – plants, animals and micro-organisms – their genetic material and the ecosystems of which they are an intrinsic part. In recent years the concept of how large the number of life forms is worldwide has been undergoing a radical re-think. Previous estimates put the total number of species at between three and five million, but more recent research has indicated a figure of about 30 million just for the arthropods (insects, beetles, crustaceans and spiders). When the numbers of other life forms, both visible and microscopic, are added, guesstimates reach even more astounding figures.

Much of Australia's plant and animal life occurs in its natural state nowhere else on earth. Unhappily, we also have one of the highest rates of extinctions and endangered species. The pressure of increasing human populations, industrialisation, chemical use, feral animals, environmental weeds, and habitat destruction and fragmentation are some of the reasons for the decline of indigenous species. Let us all take the opportunity of the activities planned for the month of September, and the publicity they generate, to make this a turning point for our native species and ecosystems.

The following suggestions come from the Community Biodiversity Network.

PLANT NATIVES

Many Australians are planting local native plants in their gardens to produce a distinctly Australian garden, use less water and attract native birds and other animals. As many of our cities occur in regions that are rich in biodiversity, street and garden trees and veg-

etation can play an important part in urban conservation efforts.

Many of Australia's plant species are threatened: 76 higher plant species are now extinct and over 5000 are considered to be rare or threatened with extinction.

- Find out more about the different types of trees and other vegetation that occur naturally in your area.

- Plant native trees, shrubs and grasses local to your area to attract native birds and other animals.

- When planting, try to re-create the layers of trees, shrubs and ground covers found in the bush. Natural mulch (leaf litter and twigs) rather than just open lawn saves water and provides homes for beetles and worms, and in turn food for birds, lizards and other animals.

CARE FOR YOUR PETS

Many homes have a pet cat or dog. They are highly intelligent and give a great deal of love and companionship in return for care. It is easy to care for our pets to both improve their welfare and reduce their impact on native wildlife.

Cats are known to hunt 100 species of native birds, 50 mammal species, 50 rep-

tile species and numerous frog and insect species. They are most active at night, dusk and dawn when much of our native wildlife is also active. Even well-fed domestic cats will prey on and kill native wildlife because of their natural hunting instincts. Native animals killed by domestic cats include possums, bandicoots, birds, lizards, snakes, skinks, geckos, and bats. Domestic cats kill, on average, about 30 native animals per year. Dogs also kill native animals, and are one of the biggest killers of koalas in urban areas.

- Keep your cat inside your home at night, to stop it roaming, hunting and killing native birds and other animals at night. Your cat should not be let out until after the birds have finished their dawn feeding.

- Attach two bells to your cat's collar to warn other animals, preferably use a bright reflective collar.

- Desex your cat to prevent unwanted kittens, unless it is being kept for breeding.

- Keep your dog on your property at night and out of areas where native animals are active.

- Tell your friends and family how to look after their pets to protect native wildlife.

BUILD A FROG POND

Frogs have survived on earth for over two hundred million years – through ice ages, global warming and droughts. But today, their numbers are falling quickly.

Harmful changes to the earth's climate, loss of habitat, and pathogens are the major factors causing the loss of our frogs. In Australia about 60 of an estimated 200 species have been reported in various stages of decline – nearly one third of all known Australian frogs.

- Learn to identify what frogs live naturally in your area.

- Design a frog friendly habitat in your garden

- Plant native plants to attract insects for frogs to eat.

- Never move frogs or tadpoles from their natural habitat.

- Build a frog pond in your garden or at school.



Pet dogs are a danger to koalas. Make sure your dog is contained at night when koalas are on the move.

- Avoid using pollutants, such as insecticides, near frog habitat.
- Get involved in a community group helping to save threatened frog species or habitat.

PRACTISE CATCH AND RELEASE FISHING

Australians love to fish: 4.5 million Australians regularly fish for recreation and sport. One in four Australians enjoys fishing and one in every two Australian households owns fishing tackle.

The immense popularity of fishing means that Australians are in danger of loving their fish to death. Some fish stocks are in decline and in some areas fishing is contributing to the destruction of fish breeding areas.

A number of native fish are also threatened with extinction, including Australia's largest freshwater fish, the Murray cod.

- Use barbless hooks (make your own by crimping the barbs).
- Don't let the fish flop about the boat or on land.
- Wet your hands and try to keep the fish in the water when removing the hook.
- Use pliers to back the hook out and avoid touching the gills.
- Cut the line if the fish is hooked deeply (stomach acids will dissolve the hook).
- Revive a tired or semi-conscious fish. Hold it gently and move it forward to force water through its gills. When it has revived and is able to swim normally set it free.

- Support the fish facing into the current until it swims away.
- Get involved in programmes that restore coastal and streamside, such as Fishcare and Coastcare.

JOIN A BUSHCARE OR COMMUNITY GROUP

Australians are increasingly becoming involved in community projects to protect and restore wildlife habitat and native vegetation. These range from efforts to create habitat for threatened species, to fencing off remnant bush.

These actions contribute to slowing down the destruction of habitat, the major cause of biodiversity loss.

- Contact your local environment centre or council to find out what biodiversity related community projects exist in your area.
- Become involved in a local community group involved in protecting or restoring wildlife habitat or native vegetation. This could include a Bushcare,

Threatened Species, Coastcare, Friends of . . . , Waterwatch or Landcare Group.

EVENTS

The following just some of the events being organised throughout Australia during September. For information about how you can be involved in your area, call the Community Biodiversity Network on 02-9380-7629.

Date: 11 September
Event: Native Orchids – Their Place in Our Environment
Contact: Anne Westwood
Ph/fax: 03-5678-8483

Date: 12 September
Event: Earth Alive! National Biodiversity Month – Down by Tingalpa Creek
Contact: Ian Curtis
Ph: 0419-723-354

Date: 18-19 September
Event: Wild Aware: Environmental Expo
Contact: Frances Lawson-Cohen
Ph: 02-4782-6079
Fax: 02-4782-9194

Date: September
Event: Celebrating Biodiversity on Eyre (exhibition)
Contact: Les Walters
Ph/fax: 08-8682-6444

Date: September
Event: Mallee Fowl Survey for Gnowan-gerup and Jerramungup Shires
Contact: Ken Beasley
Ph: 08-9336-6911
Mobile: 0417-742-310

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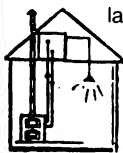
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SPONGY SEATS

by Keith Upward, Darraweit Guim, Vic.

Cane-bottomed chairs can easily and neatly be repaired by weaving strips cut from discarded car tyre inner tubes. The woven rubber (now synthetic) seats will be far more comfortable than those made from stiff cane fibre, at the same time proving to be just as enduring.

Using a pair of sharp household scissors, cut the inner tube into strips of between 25 millimetres and 45 millimetres in width. The best way to determine the width, is to take the seat aperture measurement and divide by the number that will give you the most suitable width of strip required. For example, a chair with an aperture of say 360 millimetres x 300 millimetres will give you a total of 22 strips at 30 millimetres.

Using a hand or electric stapler, or upholstery tacks, fix the strips side by side underneath the frame on two sides of the chair. Stretch the strips to the other side of the frame, weaving as you go. Stretch the strips enough to give you approximately six millimetres gap between them and fix to underneath the opposite side of the frame.

The chairs depicted in the photographs were quite modern of the knock-down variety that I had rescued



Cut an old inner tube into strips approximately 25-45 mm wide.



Above: Completed comfy chairs.



One of the chairs as rescued from the tip.

from the tip. I took them apart, cut away the old seating, turned the seat frames upside down, painted them in bright colours and re-upholstered them with the inner tube strips. It took approximately

one tube per seat. Discarded inner tubes can easily be obtained from your local service station.

I now have a most comfortable, spongy seat to sit on while I type this very article.

SMOKE FOR SEED GERMINATION

A lot of plants, including many Australian natives, need to experience a fire before their seeds will germinate. For a long time it was assumed that it was the heat from such events that provided the critical trigger for germination. However, in recent years certain seeds have been shown to respond to smoke, even when there is no fire. Now, for the first time, researchers have narrowed the trigger

down to a specific compound in smoke. Plant ecologists at Occidental College in Los Angeles collected dormant seeds of Whispering Bells – a common Californian wildflower that proliferates after fires – and exposed them to either straight nitrogen dioxide NO_2 or wood smoke (which contains NO_2). With as little as one minute's exposure in either situation, the researchers managed to trigger germination in every seed. They



had the same success when they exposed seeds to NO_2 vapour from sand, paper, and water that had absorbed smoke two months earlier.

As reported in *Quandong*, Third Quarter 1998, Vol 24 No 3. *Quandong* is produced by the Trée Crops Centre, PO Box 27, Subiaco, WA 6008. Ph: 08-9388-1965.

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by Shelley Hart, Stanley, Tas.

Essential oils are renown for their healing properties and can also be used in a range of natural cosmetics and cleaners. Liven up your life with some of these simply made, scintillatingly scented products.

Most of the ingredients for these recipes are available at the supermarket and are cheap and harmless to the environment. The lavender and clove oil may be a little expensive, but they keep for a couple of years so there is no waste. They are available from pharmacies or health food shops. I use all these home-made products regularly. Use your imagination to do them up in attractive bottles and containers. They make great gifts.

LAVENDER BATH CRYSTALS

- 1 packet washing soda crystals
- 1 bottle cochineal (optional)
- lavender oil

Put crystals in a bowl. Add four drops of cochineal. Mix with a spoon. Add one teaspoon of lavender oil. Mix well. Two tablespoons of these crystals may be added to the bath for a relaxing treat.

TEA TREE DEODORANT POWDER

- 375 g cornflour
- 1 packet bicarb soda
- 2 tsp tea tree oil

Sift together the cornflour and bicarb soda into a bowl. Add tea tree oil. Blend well, first with a spoon and then with the fingers to crush any lumps. Use after bathing as an underarm and foot deodorant.

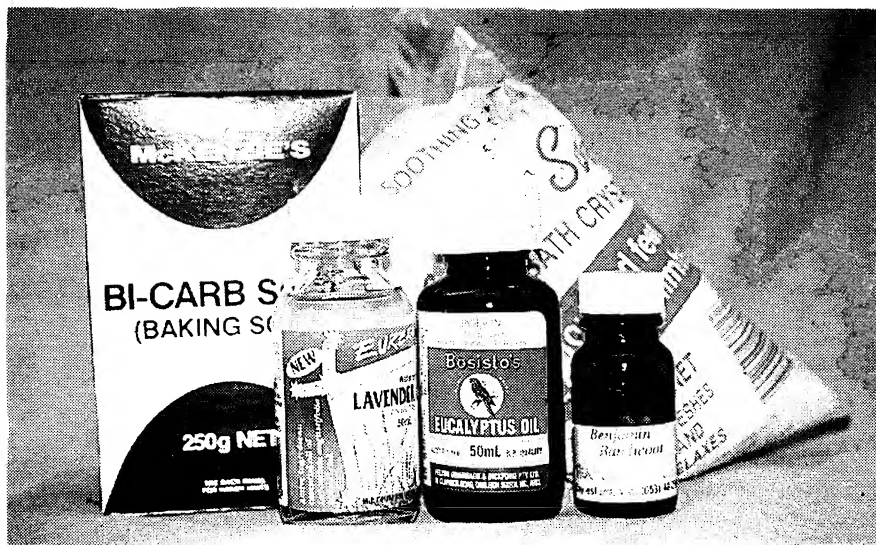
BABY POWDER

- 375 g cornflour
- lavender oil

Put cornflour in a large bowl. Add half a teaspoon of lavender oil. Blend well, first with a spoon and then with your fingers to break up any lumps. Store in a glass jar or tin with a tin lid in which holes are punched (or one of those plastic baby-wipe containers – the hole where the wipes come out is adequate for the baby powder too).

EUCALYPTUS GENERAL PURPOSE FRESHENER

- 1 large packet bicarb soda



- 1 tsp eucalyptus oil
- green food colouring
- 1 tbsp crushed, dried thyme (mainly for looks)

Put bicarb and thyme in a bowl. Add four drops of food colouring. Blend well with the fingers, pinching the powder to disperse the colour. Add one teaspoon of eucalyptus oil. Blend well, first with a spoon, then fingers.

Uses

- Carpet deodorant – rub in, leave a while, then shake or vacuum out.
- Sprinkle inside shoes.
- Sprinkle inside wardrobes and drawers to get rid of stale smells.
- Dust your pet's blankets and baskets to repel fleas.

And so on . . .

SPRAY CLEANER

- 1 cup vinegar
- ½ tsp clove oil
- 1 tsp lavender oil
- cool boiled water

In a jug mix together one cup of vinegar and one cup of, boiled water. Add one teaspoon of lavender oil and half a teaspoon of clove oil. Mix well. Pour into a clean plastic spray bottle, old plastic hairspray bottle or similar. Shake well.

Uses

- glass cleaner
- windows
- all painted, wooden or plastic surfaces
- toilet cleaner
- garbage bin cleaner and deodorant
- fridge cleaner
- mouldy surfaces

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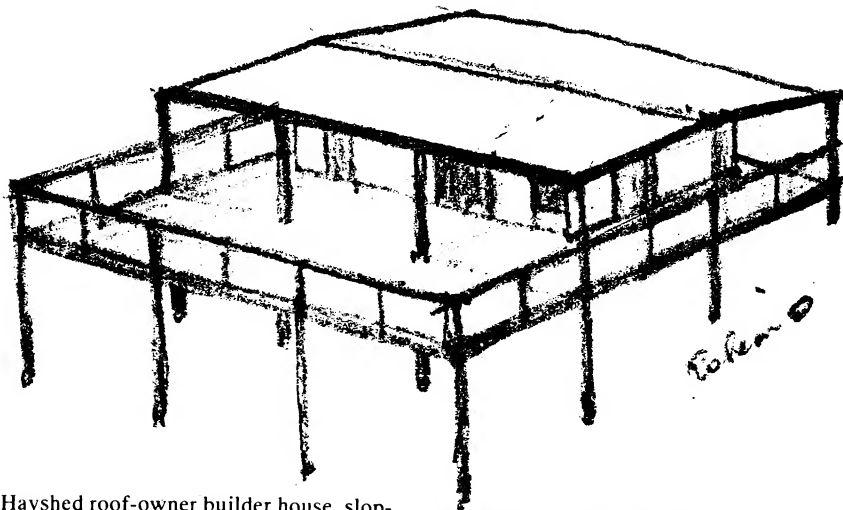
SHED LIVING UPDATE

by Roberino, Arrawarra Beach, NSW.

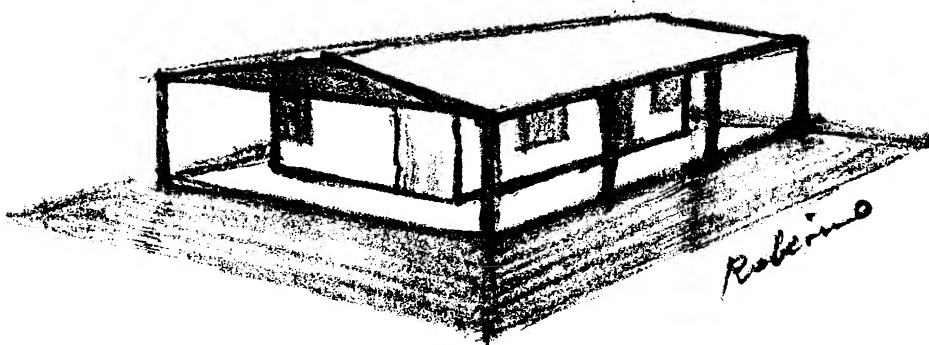
The shed living idea in GR 133 needs some clarifying. I meant the shed would be on an acreage, usually zoned as 'rural land' and usually not encumbered with 'keeping up with the Joneses' mentality of The Burbs: Mercedes in the driveway, Ferraris in the garage and so on. So for a simpler way of life in the bush on a bush block, of say five acres or more, well away from the rat race, a simple dwelling is a retreat from the madness that permeates our obsessively bureaucratic ways of life these days.

Theoretically, the further you build away from City Hall the better off you are, but a friend who thought he'd got away from it all had a visit from the building inspector from a helicopter. That did it! He sold his 5000 acre bush property in the Gulf and bought a yacht to permanently cruise the South Pacific.

My house is built on consolidated fill one metre high and tested for compaction and stability by a civil engineer. It was stabilised using a vibrating roller machine and there have been no problems even ten years after. Using the shed idea, the footings for the columns can be placed in the natural ground and allowing for taller steel columns, say one metre taller to allow for the one metre fill, the local government's building section should be satisfied. Or, if you have a timber floor instead of a concrete slab you could just build the floor higher, but



Hayshed roof-owner builder house, sloping site, timber floor and deck.



Hayshed roof-owner builder house, flat site, house on mounded earth.

you would lose the solar heating advantage of a concrete slab, (if properly designed). In flood-prone areas the fill could be much more than one metre, to avoid flood waters.

The roof size of 20 x 10 metres

may sound excessive, but bush living often involves weeks of rain which can easily get everyone down. If you have a large roof, at least if you only need a few rooms at one end you can spread out in the rest of the under-cover space – room for the kids to play and not be cooped up, so less stress for the parents. Screened from insects it is a Queensland room, with a few potted palms and hammocks to laze away a few hours after a back-breaking job. Later you can build a few more walls if you need to, but getting started quickly before the enthusiasm wanes is best and the cost is easily affordable without huge crippling mortgages. Get away from the money lenders as soon as you can.

What's done to children, they do to society – Karl Menniger.



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HUFFY HEN

I have one very nasty chook, who every 3 or 4 days seems to go bonkers, ruffles her feathers and takes a fighting cock stance and flies at me. Being up in years I don't move so fast and at present have 5 peck marks in my wrist. She is a pretty, grey speckled chook and apart from her mad moods I quite like having her around. My dog doesn't, and gives her a wide berth. Apart from having to dispose of her, is there any cure for this behaviour Megg? I feed her pellets, wheat, house scraps and lots of grass. When she was given to me as a tiny chicken, I was told the mother rejected her (now I know why) and that she was a rooster, so I called her Samuel John after Sam Newman. However she decided to lay eggs so now gets Sammy-Jo – she's a real pill but I can't kill her. I can't help wondering if a rooster would solve the problem and calm her down.

**Shirl Williamson,
LONGWARRY 3516.**

I have a retraining scheme which has been successful with several roosters, and may work on Sammy Jo, thus saving you the need to take on a rooster. A fine green branch from a fruit tree is selected and cut for use as a switch. Every time the yard is entered and the bird comes within easy reach, it is switched very lightly and continually on the comb. After one or two of these encounters the role of victim has been reversed and the bird starts to keep its distance and appraise the chook keeper. After a few weeks of maintaining this action, the switch can be left at the gate and any relapses controlled by a stern 'No'! It may be necessary to carry the switch when you're feeding or initially moving in the hen yard, but eventually it should not be necessary.

FOX DETERRENT

For those who have problems with fox attacks on new-born lambs it would be well worth trying two alpaca wethers (or males) to run with the flock. If they are introduced to the flock in time to bond with them they have a reputation of chasing foxes out of the paddock when they come near.

**Helen Danks,
ECHUNGA 5153.**

SWAMP CANCER ON HORSE

I am seeking any suggestions for the treatment of a swamp cancer on my horse. It is the size of a tennis ball and

situated behind the back hoof. Veterinary advice suggests the total removal of the growth and a possible long recovery period due to the cancer's location. I am trying to keep the horse as healthy as I can. I'm giving apple cider vinegar as a tonic, cleaning the growth with hydrogen peroxide and trying colloidal silver to stem the growth. The colloidal silver sprayed onto wounds on my horse's skin developed a black scab overnight, and totally healed in a couple of days where before the flies irritated him constantly.

**Tania Wall,
KOUMALA 4738.**

Cancers, sarcoids, whatever, are due to an upset system. Systemic is the name for these kind of diseases. In horses there is also a genetic component if the animal is a grey or chestnut. The soils on which your horse grazes must be analysed and remedied with the appropriate lime minerals. It is very important to know if the horse's paddock has been recently supered or top-dressed with a pasture booster of any kind – without these answers it is impossible to say why the horse is ill. The horse's feed must be amended to exclude grains and, as far as possible, food grown with artificial manures. It will need all the minerals suggested in 'Natural Horse Care'. Nothing left out. The dolomite, yellow sulphur, copper sulphate must all be fed as suggested and the seaweed meal must be given ad lib. Extra vitamin C must also be fed, at least a tablespoon a day of sodium ascorbate. Cod-liver oil should also be fed as suggested. No lucerne hay should be fed, only good pasture hay.

Pat Coleby

DOGGIE HOT SPOTS

Maybe someone can help me. I have a 10 year old Bichon Frise who suffers with hot spots badly. I have to clip her right back to try and heal the sores. Need to know how to treat these without injections from the vet. If you have any suggestions please write to me All letters will be answered.

**Myree Brown,
BRANXTON 2335.**

The first thing is to amend you dog's diet. It should be eating Farrells Kibble, obtainable from any fodder store. No other dried or extruded food. It must not have any meat or tinned food. You may let it have the Farrells on free take all the time. It may have vegetables such as you eat; brown rice, but not too much; a tablespoon or two a day maximum

with vegetables added. Grated raw carrot, pumpkin, and beetroot could be added in small amounts. Give it about a quarter of a teaspoon of dolomite twice a week on its feed, a pinch of yellow sulphur daily and, if you have any seaweed meal, it may have a pinch of that two times a week. Give it a teaspoon of cod-liver oil once a week.

It must not be on reticulated water – rainwater is best – and you must get a piece of copper pipe about 12 cm long and keep it in the drinking water bowl which must be glass or ceramic. Get some sodium ascorbate powder and sprinkle about half a teaspoon on its feed daily, also put the same amount in its mouth once a day – as a powder it does not taste of anything much. Avoid washing the dog. Its skin is not improved by shampoos etc. You could make a wash with half a teaspoon of copper sulphate and the same of unpasteurised cider vinegar all mixed up in half a litre of water (keep it in a sealed bottle when not in use). Dab this on the sore spots with a sponge or similar, do not rub it in. These measures will hopefully make the dog feel a lot better. Please read 'Natural Pet Care' as you will understand a bit more what I am talking about.

Pat Coleby

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BIODIVERSITY ON THE REEF

Though we think of the Great Barrier Reef as being made up of spectacular coral formations and colourful reef fish, there are other less well known communities and habitats which are an integral part of the reef and in equal need of protection to ensure conservation of the reef's amazing biodiversity. These include the soft bottom communities, seagrass beds and a variety of near-shore communities. To ensure the biodiversity conservation of all these ecosystems the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority has begun to develop a 'representative areas' programme which will identify the different habitat types, assess threats, and identify appropriate levels of protection. This programme will contribute to a nation-wide review of marine and terrestrial areas aimed at protecting Australia's biodiversity.

For more information contact: GBRMPA, PO Box 1379, Townsville MC, 4810. Ph: 07-4750-0700.

BIRD BIODIVERSITY

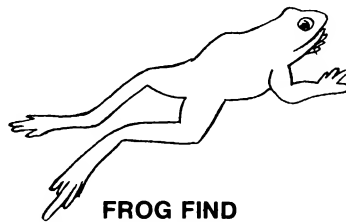
Concerns have been expressed that as many as half of Australia's bird species could be extinct within 100 years. Many migratory species are already endangered, with honeyeaters having been in decline since the mid '70s – in some heathlands they have all-but disappeared. Other nectar eaters face a similar plight as the habitats of the plant species they depend on become scarcer and more fragmented. Ironically, other more adaptable species such as ravens and currawongs are increasing in numbers. To halt and even turn around the species decline we need to stop clearing native vegetation, reduce pressure from grazing, control feral animals, and plant more native vegetation to restore ecosystems on which our bird life depends.

ANALOGUE FORESTRY

Sri Lankan ecologist, Dr Senanayake, defines analogue forestry as 'a system of silviculture which seeks to create an ecosystem that is analogous both in architectural structure and ecological function to the original community'.

He encourages farmers to plant 15 percent or more of their land to farm tree plantations or shelter belts containing a diverse range of species that mature at different times. The plantation should be sustainable and contain, as well as the woodlot, a mix of other edible and saleable plants. Biodiversity is encouraged by means of the mosses and lichens, fungi, bacteria, understorey plantings and insect, bird and animal life. Benefits of this method of forestry include reduced erosion and water runoff, less need for fertilisers, greater insect diversity leading to reduced need for pesticides, stock shelter and forage, a more flexible and durable farm system better able to cope with changing climatic conditions or unusual seasons.

Such a system will take money and resources to set up, but will add to farm profitability in the medium to long term. An example of a shelter belt designed for timber and floral production on a beef farm initially cost \$6000 per hectare to set up, but had a positive cash flow after five years. Subsequent years showed 30 – 50 percent return on capital.



FROG FIND

Frog species worldwide are in decline. In Australia, 13 species are considered to be in decline or under threat and seven are labelled as 'missing'. Factors responsible for this catastrophic situation in the frog world include viruses, fungal infections, acid rain, UV radiation, and indiscriminate pesticide use. There is, however, some optimism emerging from the general gloom. Two years ago a Queensland researcher rediscovered two previously missing species in the far north of the state: the sharp-snouted day frog, last seen in 1994, and the northern tinker frog, last seen in 1991. The finds have only recently been publicised and have given rise to hopes that other missing species are not extinct, but merely experiencing population fluctuations.

RETURN OF THE TIGER?

A perfectly preserved baby Tasmanian tiger recently discovered at the Australian Museum opens up the possibility of reversing the extinction of a species for the first time. The tiger was preserved in a jar of alcohol in 1866 and its DNA is still intact. Scientists believe that, given advances in cloning and genetic technology, plus of course the funds and application, it could be possible to clone a tiger in the not-too-distant future.

CALICIVIRUS UPDATE

Late last year the results of a two-year study on the rabbit calicivirus showed that it continues to be effective in controlling rabbit numbers. It has been more successful in arid areas than it has in wetter locations, with an initial population crash of up to 90 percent in dry zones and an average of 65 percent in other areas. The study also confirmed that greater success is achieved when the calicivirus is used in conjunction with other control measures.

ANTS FOR WEED CONTROL

The insignificant ant plays an important role in the environment. It excavates the soil, aerating, bringing nutrients from lower in the soil profile to the surface and allowing moisture penetration to deeper levels. It scavenges surface detritus of dead animals and insects, preys on a variety of pests and is itself prey for a range of animals and other insects. Ants are also significant in the rehabilitation of mine sites, being indicators of soil health. Overseas, ants are used in the biological control of pests in some crops, including cashews, coconuts, cocoa, sunflowers and cotton. Now, researchers at Agriculture Victoria in Rutherglen have discovered that they play a role in controlling agricultural weeds by eating their seeds. Apparently, the tiny scavengers show a preference for seeds of wild radish and annual ryegrass. More work is being done which might lead to the exploitation of their potential as environmentally safe weed controllers on a broader scale.

FEEDBACK LINK-UP FEEDBACK

Dear Grassroots,

Has anyone got any information on where I could get **GOOSE-BERRY SEEDS OR SEEDLINGS**? My mum is quite discouraged that you cannot buy gooseberries anymore and I would appreciate any information. Also, if any one has any nonchemical ideas about keeping mosquitoes at bay so I can keep the house windows open at night I'd love to hear from you.

Rachel Moran,

56 Coronation Ave, BEACHMERE 4510.

Although you can discourage mozzies somewhat by planting tansy, basil, lavender and a plant known as mozzie buster; by getting rid of stagnant water around the house; and by burning citronella candles; open windows are an open invitation. Screens are the best solution, especially in view of the number of serious mosquito-borne diseases.

Dear Grass Roots,

Having acknowledged the need to start a new life with my child, we are hoping to move in the near future. The area I am looking at is between **BALLINA AND ULMARRA, NSW**. I know only a few people in that area, so I would love to hear from like-minded persons who may like to correspond. I am 43 and enjoy fishing, writing, music, trucks, camping and crafts, and the company of easy-going, honest people.

Marcia Kearney,

PO Box 9, OXENFORD 4209.

Dear GR,

While supporting Lynda Pickstone's letter in GR 131 about the benefits of **GOATS' MILK**, I disagree with her blaming the Labor Government of Queensland for banning unpasteurised milk. It is the bureaucrats and people within the dairy industry continuing an attack that started under the former coalition government. I have several letters to prove this, the final one from the former Health Minister replying to a letter from myself. If anything, the government should be more receptive to public requests for the legal sale of unpasteurised goats' milk. It is a fight that can be won.

Phillip Jackson,

50 Fitzroy St, KINGAROY 4610.

Dear GRs,

Many readers ask about treatments for eczema and shingles. Try the following for **ECZEMA**: Marigold tea should be drunk warm and applied as a cold wash to the skin; one uses the flowers at the rate of 30 grams to 600 ml of water. Bilberry juice is an excellent medicament to paint on the sores. Watercress is an essential item of diet for sufferers of eczema. Walnut leaves can be applied, 15 grams to 600 ml water, for external use only. Slippery elm soap is probably the best soap to use, although if any purely herbal soaps are available they will do as well. Avoid soaps with animal fat or chemicals in them. Lemon juice can be taken at regular intervals and applied to the sores. Slippery elm and honey mixed with warm water and a pinch of cayenne pepper should be taken every morning before breakfast. Use a dessertspoon of each ingredient to three of water. Carbohydrates, sugar, fats, and starches must be rigorously pruned back and more proteins, fruit and vegetables eaten. One meal a day should be a pure salad.

SHINGLES: Is basically an inflammation of the nervous system, although it shows itself physically as a series of pus-bearing sores circling around half the chest. Walnut leaves used 45 grams to 600 ml of boiling water, simmered for 10 minutes. Allow to cool, then apply as a wash, externally, the mixture is not to be taken internally. Sage tea is a must - 30 grams to 600 ml of boiling water. Nettle tea can be used jointly with sage tea, or the two herbs can even be mixed to make one tea. Camphor and menthol mixed together form a beneficial rub to apply to the affected areas. Burn any scabs which come off as they carry germs. Keep the patient warm and give plenty of rest. A visit to a professional analyst often reveals some deep-rooted psychosomatic reasons for the upset. I see there are many requests about various health problems. Will reply individually to various enquiries if 5 x 45 cent

stamps are included, as I have something that may interest people using vitamins, minerals, herbs and food supplements: C Kennedy, Anita, Midge Holman, Kay Edwards, all from GR131.

Anne Gear can find all the information she requires in GR 94. Joyce McCrohan regarding bull ants, the best thing is to pour boiling water down their holes at night, better than chemicals. For bees, you'll never find a solution as you live in an area where bee keepers have permits to use eucalyptus forest that surrounds your area. It depends on what eucalyptus is out in flower at the time, as to how many keepers use the area.

Colin Law

C/- PO Box 117, SEYMOUR 3661.

Hi There,

I've been getting GR for untold years and find it **TRULY AMAZING** how you can come up with new and interesting stories. I know it's not only your doing, as readers' stories are so important to the magazine. Even after all these years (I've been reading GR since I was in high school and now I am 40), I never find it boring and still read it from cover to cover.

Thank you for doing such a great job. A big pat on the back for everyone.

Lorrie Powell,

38 Sapphire Crt, NORTH MACKAY 4740.

Dear Megg & Crew,

A very happy hello to you all! I wrote you last year on behalf of my daughter Jane, seeking help via Feedback for **NATURAL REMEDIES** to assist in treating her **SKIN PROBLEM**. The response I received from GR folk was sensational. So many letters with so many different tips and recommendations.

I mentioned in my letter that Jane had been put on the pill to help settle things down and the results have been amazing. Her skin has totally cleared up, but unfortunately a few small spots/scars remain. These I'm sure will vanish over the years with assistance from remedies I have received plus a bit of aromatherapy-based therapeutics.

Some of the letters I received were very flattering in terms of being a loving, supportive father who is obviously very proud of his daughter. Well, look what's happened since I wrote to you! Proud indeed! I'm more than proud, especially since her mother and myself divorced six years ago. I know all divorces have their different sets of circumstances, however, if both parents remain loving and nurturing towards their children and commit to keeping their personal differences away from the children's ears and eyes then all can grow in a positive way! That's my story anyway.

Jim Darling,

2 Dawn Ave, DANDENONG 3175.

Jim sent us a copy of a prize-winning essay of Jane's on living in a country town.



Hello There,

Am very interested to obtain recipes for **JAM MAKING WITHOUT SUGAR**, using fruit juices as a substitute.

Helen Samootin,

100 Kingsley Tce, MANLY 4179.

You will find sugarless jam instructions in GRs 35, 57 & 83.

Dear GR Readers,

I wrote in GR 131 for help in three areas: locating friend Brown-eye, Ron Brown; remedies for Lupus **SLE**, and rural property for lease-buy, etc. Due to personality clashes and different views on life, mail hasn't been forwarded to my new address, and post offices don't redirect from caravan parks, so if any writers have had mail returned or no answers, please try again to my new address, love to hear from you all and anyone local in new area.

Cazza Kennedy,

857 Hills Rd, ROSEDALE 4674.

FEEDBACK LINK-UP FEEDBACK

Dear GR,

To Maureen Aitken GR130 re **CLEAN HONEY**. When you get the frames out of the hive ready for spinning, slice the tops off the wax cells with a sharp knife and put the tops in a piece of flyscreen sitting in a sieve over a bucket. Once the honey has been spun, pour it through some flyscreen sitting in a sink and into a clean bucket. We always do it this way and get relatively clean honey. You can also line the sieve with muslin or cheesecloth to catch any other dirt particles, but this will mean that the honey takes longer to filter through. We usually leave the buckets sitting overnight covered with a tea towel to allow all of the honey to filter through. Don't squeeze the flyscreen or the cheesecloth as this forces impurities through the mesh.

Thanks for putting the 'Outback Christmas' article in GR130. I've had some enthusiastic responses from it. Alas, that was our last Christmas at Mt Marlow. We didn't want to leave the station as such, but economics and management problems led me to apply for a full-time teaching position six months ago. I have a position as a year 1/2 and music teacher at Miles State School for 1999. Miles is a rural area on the outer Darling Downs surrounded by cattle and cropping properties with some sheep. As my husband came off his motorbike at work, injuring his left knee, he won't be working around Miles initially until his injury has healed. Then he is going to look for work on the properties.

We have a place on 100 acres to rent just outside Miles (we couldn't face moving into town and civilisation!), but it will be quite different from 189,000 acres. Still, it's a new phase of our lives and a new challenge. Once settled, we hope to buy a place of a few hundred acres and run cattle. So I won't be able to continue doing any articles about station life. We'll be closer to hobby farmers now. We will still practise a lot of our self-sufficient techniques. My money making activities will be curtailed as I will be working full time, but I'll try to keep up some of my craft.

Karen Long,
PO Box 46, MILES 4415.

Dear GR,

Wanted: a proven **DESIGN FOR A WATER HEATER** using wood as the fuel. Some years ago I saw one which re-used an electric water heater's tank and it worked very well. Electric water heater tanks usually fail only at the top of the tank because there is always an air pocket there and rusting mostly occurs where you have both air and water together. Thus many firms recycle these heater tanks into potbelly stoves etc, but none that I can locate make a bath chip heater. So it's make my own I guess. Any advice would be welcomed.

I am also wanting to buy a **FLAME THROWER** to burn off seeds of weeds so they don't multiply. I've looked everywhere but to no avail. Some people remember them from the 1960s, but haven't seen them for sale since. They are about a metre long, and five centimetre diameter metal tube with a pump at the top to pressurise the kerosene they burn. Any ideas? Even second-hand.

Roberino,

Lot 4 ARRAWARRA BEACH 2456.

Dear GRs,

Thank you so much for a wonderful magazine. I am a relatively new reader but wish I had found the magazine years ago. There are two things I would like to ask readers advice on. Firstly, I would like to grow **LAVENDER** to produce oil for myself. Is there anyone who knows how to do this and could advise me, also on what type of lavender to use. I would be most grateful of any help. Secondly, I would like to make my own soap. Does anyone have a simple way to do this. I have never tried making soap before. I am after a second-hand copy of *Living Better For Less*, as it is out of print.

Jill Prosser,
Box 517, JOONDALUP 6919.

Dear Grass Roots,

Thank you for your fantastic magazine. I have been reading it avidly for the last five years and love every page. My wife and I are travelling in our van around Australia. There is so much to see and do on the road that we're never bored. We've been rock hunting in Tamworth creeks, WWOOFing in wild mountains, trekking up cloudy NSW mountains

and fishing in Noosa River mangroves. At the moment we're based in Tewantin, touring around national parks searching for bushfoods and sleeping under the stars. This is a mighty fine country for travelling and we'd encourage anyone with a few dollars and some wheels, or a thumb, to get cruisin'.

We've been fasting every Monday for the last seven months, for health and spiritual reasons. We would like to hear from anyone who could give us some advice on DIY enemas, to incorporate with the fast day.

The house we're staying in is cockroach hotel! Does anyone have some ideas for natural deterrents or **COCKROACH TRAPS**? There are three children living in the house, so we're trying to avoid insecticides. Any advice will be appreciated. Health and happiness to you all.

Jeremy and Julia,
45 Gympie St, TEWANTIN 4565.

Dear Reader,

I am a teacher with ten years experience as well as a published author and I am looking for an alternative to the current system of teaching. I recently read a copy of your magazine where I found comments about **STEINER, WALDORF AND MONTESSORI SCHOOLS**.

I was wondering if teachers or parents who may be involved in any of these schools could contact me, to let me know how your schools operate as opposed to the mainstream systems. I want to be able to offer my students more, but as I read current research I find the latest ideas only offer more of the same couched in different terms. I feel there is something missing in the mainstream system, but university research has no answer.

Royce Bond,
16 Ward St, GRACEMERE 4702.

Dear GR People,

After so many enquiries asking how to recycle, or should I say cycle, **SOAP ENDS**, forget melting them down and remoulding. The easiest way of using them is to wear them down to about two millimetres thick and when you have finished your shower press it onto a new bar of soap so that tomorrow it will have dried on and become a part of the new bar. This way you use 100 percent of your soap. If you have lots of ends from working in a motel or something you can put them in a stocking, a sock, or a sponge that you have cut down the middle to load your soap ends into.

Peter Bailey
Lot 9, Claytons Estate, BEROWA WATERS 2082

Dear Grass Roots,

Thank you for the article 'Converting Kids to Homemade Bread', by Heather Kozak in GR 131. Thank you Heather for sharing your bread making experiences and recipes.

You wrote: 'Unbleached white flour while not as high in fibre as wholemeal, still has its nutrients intact.' Not true! No flour, white or wholemeal, has its nutrients intact unless it is milled directly before use. The wheat kernel is designed to perfectly store the nutrients within. Once broken open, as in milling, the vitamin nutrients immediately begin to oxidise. Within 72 hours, 90 percent of over 30 nutrients are virtually gone. Commercial millers remove the germ, germ oil and the bran to keep the flour from turning rancid. Wholemeal flour is white flour with bran added to it. Makes no difference if it's a super-market generic brand or health food shop stoneground wholemeal variety. **MILL YOUR OWN WHEAT GRAIN** just before use and be rewarded with the natural bread of life for your physical bodies.

Ralph Hess,
PO Box 5280, ALEXANDRA HILLS 4161

Dear GR Folks,

Thank you for a very informative magazine. It has changed our lives greatly. We are interested to purchase some land within forty kilometres of a beautiful place called Gloucester, NSW in the very near future. If any GR folk could be kind enough to write if they had a parcel of land for sale, or just anyone **LIVING NEAR GLOUCESTER** could maybe write and help us with information on climate, schooling, as we have three children, it would be much appreciated. Thank you.

Roy & Vicki Ida,
2/37 Tuncurry St, TUNCURRY 2428.

FEEDBACK LINK-UP FEEDBACK

Dear GR Folks

I'm in my mid 70s and the saying, 'You're never too old to learn', rings true. My **POTATOES I HAD IN TWO DRUMS** kept coming up, looking lovely then would wilt and die. The sun has got very much hotter in the last decade, so I thought the drums were too hot for the potatoes. Emptied the lot out and some lovely sized potatoes came out riddled with termites. I've never seen that before. Turned my attention to the back bed and pulled a petty pink daisy bush out which gave up trying to regenerate. More termites. Flung the bush down and next thing my old Silkie dog was into the termites, lapping them up, she cleaned the lot up. I know dogs of all varieties will eat insects, but termites! On Landline one Sunday, part of the programme was on the dung beetle and the problems in getting them established. One problem is the fox. One was shot and they counted 72 dung beetles in its gut. Boy, they must eat anything.

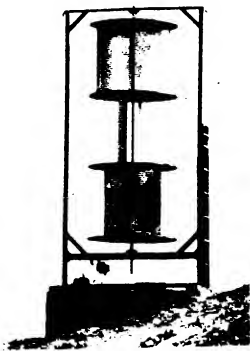
In GR 132 was advice to introduce brewer's yeast into the dog's diet for fleas. It works. My Lesterfield Terrier had a terrible problem with eczema: grass, carpets, sand, even a fly walking on her back started her off. Tried everything. Then finally I remembered the yeast cure. I used enough to cover a one cent piece, mixed it into her food every night and, hey presto, she is free of the itch. Her coat has grown and she looks lovely. Now all I've got to do is de-gas the little stinker. I've tried charcoal, doesn't work.

MEAT ANTS: The pest exterminator told my son to either place shallow lids of, or pour full cream pasteurised milk down the nest holes. The milk solidifies and the ants feed the larvae with it. That kills them. Scary thoughts enter the mind with that advice.

I have had enforced rest a fair bit lately. Cause: my knee collapses, legacy of a sheep butt 30 odd years ago. These last two rests have been easy as I've had a feast with back numbers of GR. We all laughed so much about the piece on toilets, GR 45 p 33. My husband always attended to that chore. My daughter's husband was often away so she attended to that job. She didn't laugh as much as us and agreed with the poem on the wonder of a flush toilet.

All the best to the staff and contributors for a first class magazine.

Mary Mathews,
MUNDIJONG 6123



Dear GRs,

Even though I like windmills, I am sick of changing pump buckets on my mill and am looking for a better wind-driven setup. Does anyone have any information on hooking up and building a **SAVONIUS TYPE OF MILL**? I have to pump around 300 metres and the tanks are around 30 metres higher than the dam. Dam to pump height is around 1.2 metres and I am pumping through five centimetre poly. Any information would be greatly appreciated.

John,
PO Box 141, WODONGA 3690.

Dear GR Readers,

I have been a GR reader for nearly 20 years now, and we are still learning. When my young son caught **HEAD LICE** at school (some years ago now) he would not let me use the horrid stuff from the chemist a second time, and I did not blame him! So I had no alternative but to use the nit comb on wet hair. The water made their legs stick together or something, and the hatched ones were easy to comb out into a bowl of water. The unhatched ones caused no problems. So I washed my son's hair on alternate days, used the nit comb until all eggs had hatched. No more head lice!

I feel I'm an expert at **TOMATO GROWING**. I have about five or six different varieties and save my seeds every year. This year we

had bumper crops, chiefly because I had not been able to stake them because of our sickness, and they were just left to spread on the ground, with four to six times the quantity they would have had if they had been staked. Here in northern NSW we are semitropical, so it is a good idea to start the seeds in punnets nice and early, July-Sept, so that the fruit fly appears when the peak of production is over. My specialty is yellow tomatoes. Someone gave me three 13 years ago and I have propagated seeds from their progeny ever since.

Lyn Ballantyne of Gympie Qld says she wants to grow **OXHEART TOMATOES**. I tried to grow these several times, but I was always unsuccessful, and I came to the conclusion that Oxhearts perhaps prefer a colder climate. (I had brought the seeds with me from Victoria after visiting relatives.) Lyn, grow Tom Thumbs and some smaller tomatoes, they grow more easily than the Grosse Lisse or tropical varieties, and are more bug resistant.

M-Levakis who likes travelling but not the **THIEVES** she finds: try buying or altering clothes that have deep pockets. Do not use a separate handbag, it is too easily snatched. For overseas travel, I made a zipped oblong bag of strong material, and sewed it on to a tape that tied on around the waist. Men like to wear it across one shoulder, and it can be worn under all clothes next to the skin, especially at night, if need be.

We use a **NEEM SPRAY** on pawpaws, other fruits, and in the vegie garden, and the bugs are far fewer, but wire netting is the only way to separate produce from rabbits. Does anyone know of a humane way of getting rid of them? We had none until about a year ago.

We are now **WWOOF HOSTS** and enjoy having some help now and then on our five acres. WWOOFers who are also interested in the teachings of Sai Baba are especially welcome.

Pauline Kenyon,
DUNOON 2480.

Fellow Grass Rooters,

After seven years on my practice farm (1/4 acre block on Sydney's outskirts), next year looks like we will be making the move to the country. After much thought, my wife and I have decided the far south coast of NSW would satisfy our needs, and, providing her employer can find a job for her, we will head off in the new year. I would like to make contact with folks in the **BEGA - EDEN** area, hoping to gain a picture of the area a little more detailed than the brief images I have got whilst being a tourist.

On a totally separate topic - I would like to exchange letters with other **HOUSE HUSBANDS**. I have been doing this difficult job for four years now (three boys aged 5, 2 and 11 weeks) and would appreciate the wisdom of other fellows in my position.

Geoff Robinson,
45 Pitt St, RICHMOND 2753.

Dear Editor,

Does anyone know of a **HEALER WHO USES A VEGA** machine to diagnose patients? Your magazine costs me a fortune in postage - so many people I write to after reading their letters! But it's money well spent; my knowledge keeps growing, except in one area. In one copy of GR, I read about people buying old caravans and buses (both plural), but I've been following this news item up for two months and am none the wiser. Where would one bury a caravan and why would one bury a big item such as a bus?

Mrs D Henderson,
8 Lakeset Dve, TRARALGON 3844.

Please keep letters brief, clearly written and relevant to self-sufficiency topics. Letters pushing barrows (religious, political or other) will not be published.

FEEDBACK LINK-UP FEEDBACK

Dear Megg,

A while ago, I wrote suggesting that those who have Internet Access might enjoy visiting a **GR-TYPE NEWSGROUP**. I'm sorry, I got the name of the group wrong – the correct name is **misc.consumers.frugal-living**, not **rec.consumers&c.** as I suggested.

Barrie Mather,
RMB 3006, Harry's Creek Rd,
VIOLET TOWN 3669.

Dear GR Readers,

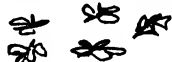
Due to unprecedented response to my letter published in the Feedback section, I am **UNABLE TO REPLY** to the huge number of people who have written. Thank you so much for sharing your experiences.

Helen,
GYMEA 2227.

Dear Megg & Co,

Re my recent letter regarding our new address. Unfortunately, we need to move back to the city and would like you to change the address for anyone requiring more info on **THE BIG TRIP**. Our new address is: 10 Rhodes Close, Mindarie, WA 6030.

RE & TA Smith,
6 King St, HARVEY 6220.



Dear GR & Readers,

Does anybody know about the safety of **MOZZIE ZAPPERS** that plug into the powerpoint? I wish to use one when the baby arrives as our house is not finished yet (a few gaps here and there) and the mozzies in our area are extremely bad. Are the pads supplied with the zapper safe chemically? Can you use another material (cardboard?) and put essential oils on it?

Jodie,
BOAT HARBOUR 2484.

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to ask if there are any readers who have been enquiring about **BACK COPIES** of your magazine. We are moving and I find it impossible to take these with me. I have: nos. 6 to 17, 19-29, 30-39, 40-49, 50-60, 61-69, 70-76, 77, 80, 82, 83, 100, 101, 102, 103, Giant 98 Page Issue, *Bumper Book*, *Family Book*, *The Early Years*. I would like \$1 per copy plus postage.

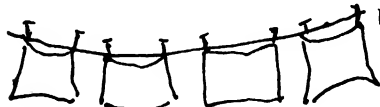
Mrs G. Gardiner,
RMB 7155, HAWKESDALE 3287.

Dear Grassroots Crew,

I'd like to know if there are any other GR people affected by type 1, **INSULIN DEPENDANT DIABETES** in their family? Earlier this year my 23 month old son was diagnosed and I'm still trying to get my head around all these new worries and financial responsibilities. I'd just like to know we're not the only ones. Where we live is isolated from support groups etc and there aren't any other toddlers with this condition.

I've noticed that hardly a magazine issue goes by without mention of **CLOTH VERSUS DISPOSABLE NAPPIES**. I have a pattern and instructions for a fitted cloth nappy which I'd be happy to exchange for 10 x 45 cent stamps (includes posting back).

Mrs Tania Gilbert,
PO Box 79, DUBLIN 5501.



Dear GR, Readers and Friends,

I am here today to ask for potential contacts re **CARETAKING/RENTAL PROPERTIES** in the Bellingen/Nambucca Heads/Lismore region from July 99. You see, I am to relocate to the region from Darwin to partake in post grad studies throughout 2000. I am seeking a 'home' base that will be accessible to tertiary commitments and work opportunities (TAFE colleges etc).

I am a single woman, mid-30s. I have experience in both caretaking and renting, and can supply references upon request.

I shall be travelling via The Centre, Adelaide, Vic, NSW and am interested to hear from anyone who can offer a day's WWOOFing

accommodation along the way (I have horticultural experience).

Ciara,
C/- 4 Hooker St, ISLINGTON 2296.

Dear GR & Readers,

WEST HILL SCHOOL is hoping to link-up with some of the school's past pupils and staff at its 75th celebrations which will be held on Sunday 30th April 2000. We are currently collecting reminiscences and interesting snippets of information about the school and its district for the 75th Anniversary Book. Hopefully, there are some GR readers who can help us with this by sending in some information.

Jill Lyle,
Community Mail Bag Orkatie, Via MACKAY 4741.

Dear Grass Roots,

I am hoping that someone can help with my problem. I am **YEAST AND GLUTEN INTOLERANT**. I've seen a naturopath, but am still suffering. My doctor tells me that my problem is in the oesophagus. It seems very often, no matter what I eat will bring discomfort in the digestive system. If anybody can offer some help, please write.

Olympia R Buemi,
51 Mooloolah Dr, MINYAMA 4575.

Dear Readers,

Please does anyone know where I can obtain a **SEED OIL PRESS**, preferably hand-operated, for macadamia nuts and sunflower seeds?

Pauline Kenyon,
DUNOON PO 2480.

Dear GR Readers,

I would like to call upon the help of your readers to assist me. In the coming months one of my greatest friends will be having her second child. She has asked me to be present for the birth, which will be a **HOME BIRTH**. I am twenty-three and as of yet do not have any children of my own. I would love it if the kind folk of GR could provide me with their own tales of birth, good, funny, bad, birth at home, birth at hospital, their experiences, new ideas and their advice.

Shari Bonnette,
19 Towarri St, MUSWELLBROOK 2333.

Dear GR Readers,

I am desperately trying to find the best area for growing organic vegetables in a **CHEMICALLY FREE COMMUNITY** or environment and furthest away from chemical spraying. My wife suffers from multiple chemical sensitivity (MCS). I have been living in the East Gippsland area for the past six years and the area has progressively gotten worse with chemical spraying, especially herbicides. Even a half-kilometre away the farmers are broadacre spraying herbicides. The air is affected and for weeks and even months, due to the constant wind drift in the area, it's affecting the whole family's health. We are at a desperate stage as we just can't breathe anything except ammonia fumes which are sickening. All we want is clean air and a place to grow organic vegetables. We just don't know where to look and we only have limited finances, being on a disability pension. I am at a loss. If anyone can help me with any information it would be greatly appreciated.

G Vella,
PO Box 178, NICHOLSON 3882.

Dear GR,

I am writing to see if any of your readers can offer advice in three main areas. I need natural and herbal remedies/palliatives for my husband's **DEPRESSION AND ANXIETY** condition (it is genetic rather than emotionally derived). I also want remedies for a nasty persistent case of **ECZEMA** in my two year old. It is currently only responding to cortisone cream (1% strength), but I don't like to use too much of it or for too long so the problem recurs.

My main request though is for information on how to **PERMACULTURE A SMALL GARDEN**. Living in the 'burbs', particularly the newer Brisbane 'burbs', means very small blocks, and as the hubby and kids require a 'kick the footy' area, my space is limited. Could readers please tell me the most prolific producers for small places, and plants that like to go 'up'? I'm also interested in hearing from people in the Brisbane area (particularly Christians, but anyone really), who have the same interest in sustainable living practices and their applications for city living.

Kirri Griffiths,
22 Moondarra Street, CHAPEL HILL 4069.

FEEDBACK LINK-UP FEEDBACK

Dear GRs,

I am trying to find out more information on building with **STRAW BALE**. Hattie Richards, your article, Company Car to Farm Ute, in GR 128: Firstly, your parents are remarkable people to have achieved all that they have, and believe me, are the envy of many of us. Secondly, I am very keen to obtain information from someone who has actually built using straw bales. We have an old Queenslander removal house set up high and intend to build in below with straw bales. (Is this what your parents did?) We need information on building from a slab up, including the reinforcing in the walls, tying the walls to the concrete stumps, rendering the straw bales, concealing the stumps, any necessary termite treatment, and any other information which may be helpful. If there are any GR readers who have also built with straw bales I would be grateful to share in your knowledge.

C Kerr,
C/- PO BENARKIN 4306.

There was a comprehensive article on straw bale building in GR106.

Dear GR Readers,

Does anyone have a good recipe for **SAUERKRAUT** and what do you make it in? Father Kneinp called sauerkraut 'the best friend of your digestive organs'.



M Lockyer,
16/16 Telopea St,
LABRADOR 4215.

Dear Grass Roots,

After reading the request in GR 131, for a recipe for **RECONSTITUTING SOAP** from leftover slivers, I thought that maybe Claire and Tom might like to save themselves the trouble. If you simply stick the wet sliver of soap on to the new cake there are never any bits to reconstitute. We have used this method for years and find that a firm pressure is all that is required to make it stick, provided that the sliver has not been allowed to dry out.

E Kruck,
Kurruli Park, MORANBAH 4744.

Dear Readers,

I wonder could anyone recommend a **NATURAL HAIR DYE**, which will colour grey hair. I'm 56 years old, with long wavy red/brown hair, which is just starting to show a bit of grey. I don't wish to have grey hair, nor do I wish to pay \$15 per month to colour my hair, so I hope someone can help.

Also, my mother has an **AGE SPOT** about the size of a five-cent piece on her face. Any suggestions to make it fade away?

Hope all of your chooks are laying.

'Tina Turnip',
36 Martin Cres, BENARKIN 4306.

Dear Megg,

In reply to Lyn Ballantyne's request. I have **TOENAILS THAT ARE HARD** to cut, so I use a small pair of wire cutters costing around \$8 from stores like Tandy. They work better for me than nail scissors. I usually soak my feet in a bucket of warm water with liquid body soap, but the wire cutters cut just as well without any soaking.

Olga

Giddy,

I wish I had a crystal ball to read the answers to all the questions in Feedback. I've returned to reading GR for just over 12 months, after being away for over 20 years. It is even better than before.

Can anyone help with the following three queries?

Does anybody have a copy of **AB & JB Cribb, Wildfood in Australia**, published by Fontana? Can anyone explain to me the planting sequence in a mandala? Does anyone know what is: the weather/rain-fall/cost of land etc in the corner of NSW, Qld & SA, or Vic, NSW & SA? I could keep asking questions but I propose to reply to everyone so these will be enough.

A message to Roberino please! The plans for the sheds you sent me

found their way to my sons' school and one of them will be used to shade the play area and basketball courts. Thank you. It was lots cheaper than what had been proposed by an architect, and better!

Rosa Vezzoso
1/145 Burwood Rd, ENFIELD 2136.



Dear Sir/Madam,

Do other readers have problems with **CHOOKS SCRATCHING** holes all over the place? If so, simply fill in their holes with road screenings (say 2.5 cm grading). Forget the problem until they scratch elsewhere.

If you want a useful tool for your car, add a bike-spoke to your tool-kit. It's wonderful for fishing up fallen nuts in awkward places.

Similarly, if you know of an old abandoned car, same make and similar model to your own, ask the owner if you can raid it for old nuts and bolts (as well as the usuals). Ever been stuck in the bush for want of the right nut or bolt?

If you would like to improve the flavour of homemade pineapple jam, simply add a hint of mint. If your cauliflower is a little bland add parsley sauce.

If anyone has trouble removing cotter pins from a bike after squirting it with CRC (or similar), place a short length of old gal pipe around the round end of the pin as you would to prop up the bike. Loosen the nut then tap the loosened nut with a hammer. Where's your problem? The jar of the hammer is no longer absorbed by the bike's frame and tyres.

PAINTING A HOME is a very expensive project. To slash costs, months in advance, shop around clearing sales and garage sales for partly used tins of tinted paint. Nobody wants to buy second-hand tinted paint, they prefer to select their own colours. Build your colour-scheme around these tinted paints. (White is a lot more expensive.) Refuse paint with a dubious lid (probably gone hard).

To build up quantity, either add similarly shaded paint or white. This tint could land you in real trouble if you underestimate your paint requirements. Do you reckon that you could accurately remeasure half a tin of this, some of that and a bit of the other?

Try tinting your undercoat to a similar colour to that of your finishing coat for a richer finish.

Do not mix water-based paint with oil-based. Do not paint water-based paint over oil-based as they will (I understand) shrink and expand at different rates with temperature change and so peel apart.

When you buy paint, ask your store assistant if you can have your tint separately in a jar you've provided. You can then mix up what you require plus a little extra for underestimation. White leftovers are very handy indeed. Why buy four litres of tinted paint for a room requiring only 2 1/2, unless you have other intentions?

George Read,
STONEY FORD 3260.

Dear GR Staff & Readers,

I have a bush block located between Orange and Parkes in NSW. We have built a Bali-style A-frame sleeping platform for the family (five of us), cleared a couple of acres, put in a dam as well as olive trees and grape vines. All doing well. For power, we have solar with batteries. With three young children to wash, I would like to construct a **WOODCHIP HOT WATER HEATER**. If anyone could help with plans, drawings etc (or even a discarded unit that I may be able to repair), I would be most appreciative.

Greg Daly,
36 Dunoon Ave, WEST PYMBLE 2073.

Contributors and correspondents who want letters or articles returned are requested to include correct postage.

FEEDBACK LINK-UP FEEDBACK

Dear Grassroots People,

Greetings once more from the Land Of Sand, after a long, hot and humid summer, with temperatures in the mid 40s from mid December to the end of January without a break. Once more, will the gentleman who lent me a book on **GAS PRODUCERS** some years back please get in touch, I wish to return the book.

Fleas are mentioned regularly and, in my opinion, **FLEAS** on dogs or chooks are a reflection on the owner. Fleas breed in the ground or on scrungy animals. Give the unfortunate beasts or birds a good cleanup, and, after thoroughly cleaning the surrounding area where they live, literally saturate the ground with boiling water, also the chook-house or kennel. Remove the bird or beast first. A dusting with sulphur will keep fleas at bay and is harmless to the bird or beast.

I am in the throes of making a bulk lot of pumpkin jam. For those interested in making this cheapest of all jams, take one pumpkin, any sort, any size, peel it and dice the meat up small. Weigh it, add $\frac{1}{4}$ of its weight in sugar, mix well and let it stand for a night or day, turning it over occasionally, until the juice has been sucked out and sugar dissolved. Don't let it get to the fermenting stage or you will finish up with wine. For variety, add a jar of drained apricots, peaches, or anything in the dried or preserved fruit or berry line. Add tomatoes and you can call it strawberry, beetroot for raspberry. Variety is only limited by your imagination. Boil the pumpkin in its own juice, mashing it to hurry things up, stirring over a steady heat until the jam sets, don't overdo it or you will finish up with toffee.

For years I have found that when I have no choice but to eat white bread, I suffer the most awful indigestion, so I have been selecting brown or multigrain breads and, best of all, rice cake. Recently I learned that the so-called added fibre in some breads is actually wood fibre. If this is true, what do the manufacturers take us for, white ants?

I am still collecting reports of sightings and experiences of the cougar/leopard type cats that the powers that be still tell us are figments of our imagination, so if anyone has a story to tell I will be happy to listen.

**Wally Davies,
CMB PARACHILNA, 5730.**

Dear Grass Roots Readers,

I am writing about the seasons of the year in Australia. With European settlement of Australia, we were also loaded with the **EUROPEAN SEASONAL CALENDAR**. This 'imported' calendar goes something like this:

Dec-Jan-Feb = SUMMER
Mar-Apr-May = AUTUMN
Jun-Jul-Aug = WINTER
Sept-Oct-Nov = SPRING

I know this is not accurate for many parts of Australia. The Gould League, a natural history group in Victoria, has suggested the following as a calendar for the middle Yarra Region:

Nov-Dec-Jan = EARLY SUMMER
Feb-Mar = LATE SUMMER
April-May = AUTUMN
June - $\frac{1}{2}$ July = WINTER
 $\frac{1}{2}$ July - Aug = PRE-SPRING
Sept-Oct = TRUE SPRING

I'm interested to know how people living a *Grass Roots* lifestyle perceive the seasons in their particular area. Obviously, a traditional European calendar is not going to fit in places that are tropical, though it may seem to fit in cooler areas. I am hoping some reader with strong opinions on the seasonal calendar in their particular locality will write to me so we can discuss the similarities and differences between different areas. How do native trees, plants, animals and insects behave in your area at different times of the year? How do introduced species behave? Do you have four, six or more distinctive seasons?

**Circe Vlamynx,
20 James St, WINDSOR 3181.
Email: osculum@bigpond.com.au**

Dear Grass Roots Readers,

We are seriously considering **MOVING TO TASMANIA**. Any information and advice from those already there would be welcome. Especially re cost of living and work – is there any? One TAFE electronics teacher and one writer/nursing home laundry lady. I gave up SEN work after a run-in with breast cancer. Any info on running a B & B would also be welcome: hidden pitfalls, must do's etc. Meanwhile, the chooks are laying well and the runner beans are going berserk! Thanks for a warm and useful magazine. It's people that are important in life.

**Brian & Sherrian O'Connor,
86 Watts St, BOX HILL 3129.**

Dear GR,

Thanks for the great read, I buy GR whenever I can, and read it from cover to cover with great interest and assurance that I'll learn something new and interesting from each issue. Now I wish to tap into your amazing resource and ask all the GR readers and yourselves, for any information (and I mean any) on old-fashioned varieties of **WINE GRAPES**, vine cuttings, organic farming practices for grape growing and boutique wine making. I know this is a lot to cover in one question but any info would be greatly appreciated.

I have recently become associated with the wine growing industry in this country and was a bit 'stunned' as to what happens to the grapes before and after they are picked and made into wine. There is obviously a generally accepted practice for large volume production wineries, but what I saw piqued my curiosity as to what the alternative is – I hope to find out.

**Glynis M Bryden,
PO Box 105, GORDON 3345.**

Dear Grass Roots,

We have a **DISUSED ROAD** (unsealed track) running along one of the boundaries of our ten-acre block. The road is overgrown and serves no obvious purpose. We are interested in buying or leasing this land to ensure its regeneration and have contacted the Department of Natural Resources and Environment (DNRE). We were informed by the DNRE that if we wanted to lease the land it would be cheaper if we could say that we are primary producers, but at the moment all we have is our veggie patch! We were hoping that someone might be able to give us some advice about the process of leasing and/or buying such land (approximately two acres) and to provide us with a definition of 'primary producer'.

**Nick Hansen,
422 Upper Heidelberg Rd, HEIDELBERG 3084.**

Dear Grass Root Readers,

I would like to find a way to conserve food in tins. Does anyone please know where to get that **TIN SEALER**? I understand there are some you can use by hand.

**Maria Lamprecht,
PO Box 129, REDCLIFFE 4020.**

Dear Grass Roots,

We have enjoyed your magazine for several years now – it keeps fuelling the dream of one day leaving suburbia. As well as renewing our subscription, I have a request for information from fellow readers via the Feedback pages. We live on the southern edge of Sydney and keep backyard chooks. We are wondering if anyone knows where we might be able to purchase **ORGANIC GRAINS AND/OR CHOOK PELLETS** for them. I asked at the produce outlet we use now, but he said he never stocked any and wasn't sure where we might obtain any. If we could buy in bulk, even better. Hoping someone may know of an outlet.

**Sue Della Giacoma,
18 Woodfield Ave, BUNDEENA 2230.**

Try contacting **NASAA** (National Association for Sustainable Agriculture in Australia), ph: 08-8370-8455; or **ORGAA** (Organic Retailers & Growers Association of Australia), ph: 03-9737-9799.



FEEDBACK LINK-UP FEEDBACK

Hi There,

First let me say what a fantastic magazine you offer us to read, not only does it give so much information, but hope in knowing that there are people out there that do care about all living things. I am writing in search of information on **MORA THERAPY**. I have just started this as the last resort to be well again. If anyone has had this treatment, it doesn't matter if the outcome was positive or negative, I would like to hear from you. I will reply to all letters welcomely. If you could please get this information to me it would be much appreciated.

Jan,
PO Box 229, SAN REMO 3925.
email: kolberry@nex.net.au

Dear GR Readers,

I am writing to request information and cures for **TINITIS**. My 11-year-old daughter suddenly has it and she is finding it both distressing and depressing. Any information gratefully received.

Robyn Stewart,
PO WITCHCLIFFE 6286.

Dear Grass Roots,

Thank you for such a fantastic magazine – I only wish I'd discovered it sooner. I am a single 27 year old woman who is hoping to buy a couple of acres later this year and build a house in earth, straw bale, or some other alternative method. I would love to hear from anyone who has been in a similar situation, who has successfully fulfilled their dream of a home on a limited budget (one income). I am in dire need of encouragement and inspiration!

Also, if anyone has a copy of Alistair Knox's, *Alternative Housing*, that they are prepared to part with, please contact me. I stumbled upon this book some years back, in a library, and fell instantly in love with mud brick! Unfortunately, it's no longer in print.

Lisa Clayton,
43/76 Garnet St, DULWICH HILL 2203.

Dear Grass Roots,

My husband has contracted **MALARIA**. Does anyone have information about treatment/recovery? Please help; this has changed our lives.

S Robertson,
C/- PO Box 117, Seymour 3661.

Dear Megg & GR Family,

I recently rediscovered *Grass Roots* after needing info on alternative energy supplies. It was pleasing to see the magazine doing so well after many years of publication. Readers may be able to help me with hints on **GROWING SILVER BEET** successfully. As fast as I plant seedlings they seem to be eaten by something which chews the leaves. I have covered the seedlings with bird mesh, and have used snail bait and pyrethrum sprays with no success. Any ideas? Thank you in anticipation.

Pauline E Brooks,
37 Foster St, Hamilton 3300.

Dear Grass Roots - The World's Greatest Magazine,

I had a nice case of **SHINGLES** halfway around the midriff (mid January). The doctor gave me tablets enough for one week – Valtrax. Then the sores and pain came. Dabbed the sores with vinegar about three times a day to ease the pain. I started with very warm water in bath with a handful of bicarb soda, every couple of days. No hot water or direct sunlight as this seems to cause more pain. At the moment I feel about 95 percent. Hope this may help those that have these.

In regard to **FLYTRAPS** for trees (fruit fly etc): In the early Depression days, we had a kero lantern glass. The top opening was about 100 mm, the bottom opening was approximately 150 mm. The bottom part was turned in to hold cloudy ammonia. This destroyed the insects. The top had wire so it could be hung from the tree branches.

Also, have some spare copies of GR mag: from 26 to 54 included,

except numbers: 27, 30, 34, 35, 38, 42, 48, 49, 51 & 53. If possible and available would like copies of *Grass Roots* 1 - 25. Should have kept them when I worked in a newsagents instead of reading them and putting back into stock.

Alf Porter,
5 Ruby Ave NINGI 4511.

Dear GR,

My partner and I are establishing ourselves on 10 acres where water is either collected in the dam or tanks, making for a valuable commodity. A friend who used to live on acreage has told me there was an article in GR about seven years ago explaining how to **FILTER WATER USING CHARCOAL**, leaving washing water etc perfectly clean for re-use. Is there anyone out there who would know about this? We would be grateful for any useful advice.

Nicoli,
29 Bills Rd, AGNES WATER 4677.

Dear Readers,

Has anyone noticed that the modern DIY home maintenance/renovation books are not as specific as and far more superficial than the ones published during the 1960s? For instance, none of the modern ones tell you how to fix a rattling door handle. Instead, they prefer to fill up pages with photographs from different manufacturers of different products such as wood heaters – in other words they are largely elaborate junk mail that you pay for in the purchase price. This makes me wonder if publishing is about imparting wisdom or making you feel insufficient. One of the best books I have come across is the *Reader's Digest Do It Yourself Manual*. If anyone knows of a second-hand bookshop that has one, I would be most grateful to hear from them.

Alex Cranford,
PO Box 439, HAY 2711.

Dear GRs,

I'm hoping someone can help me locate Ted Trainer's Book on **ECONOMIC THEORY**. If someone could let me know the publisher/contact details etc, I'd be thrilled. Thanks for a wonderful magazine – still my favourite. Cheers!

Sue Robertson,
74 Lucerne Cres, ALPHINGTON 3078

Dear Grass Rooters,

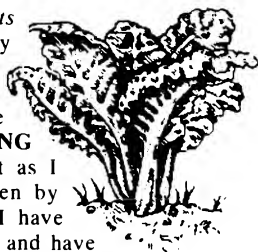
Having been an admirer of this magazine for a number of years, I have finally decided to write. I have been able to respond to some of the requests from time to time and now come forward with one or two of my own. Does anyone have information on **YURTS**? I'd like to know whether the Housing Commission would allow me to put one on my relatives' Housing Commission house should I have to go to live with them. Do they conform to cyclone building regulations?

Also, I would like to hear from someone re home schooling. I am not interested in psychology (I have my training in that), nor in help to prepare a curriculum, although that is necessary. What I want is information on anyone carrying on **TEACHING BY CORRESPONDENCE**. Particularly for a year 7 child in New South Wales, but also possibly for a year 6 and year 2 or 3. Also, if anyone has old former correspondence school, leaflets, books etc, I would be willing to purchase them and would appreciate it very much, regardless of which state's lessons they are.

I am a house-bound elderly and so I don't die of boredom or drive anyone up the wall, I have taken to collecting postage stamps and/or slogans from letters. I've just started a couple of months ago so have only a modest album. Friends give me all their used stamps no matter how common, or how many are the same, and I go through them and sort them out into sets, and make them for the MS society and RSPCA, so they benefit, albeit in a small way. So if any of you folk out there care to slip your used stamps in an envelope for me, I promise to acknowledge them, as I am quite a letter writer myself.

I am interested in gardening, but unfortunately it is now all in pots. I've grown some wonderful tomatoes (Zodiac and Zolla) in hobby boxes up here.

Mrs Doris Mintern,
25 Kalymnos Dve, KARAMA 0812.



FEEDBACK LINK-UP FEEDBACK

Dear GR Folks,

Hello, my name is Jenny and I am currently living in Sydney. It has been a long-term dream of mine to live in an **INTENTIONAL COMMUNITY**. I visualise a place that exists to care for the earth and benefit others in some way, as well as nurture those who live there (of course!). It may be a healing centre, a place for rehabilitation or time-out, an educational centre. At this stage, I'm just seeking information. I would love to hear from anyone who may have information on communities (particularly NSW and sth Qld regions), or is interested in similar ideas.

Jenny,
154 Hereford St, GLEBE 2037.

Dear Grass Roots,

Would love to hear from people who are building their own **KIT HOME**. My husband and I have just started since January of this year. We have already built the shed (that was easy), but now the hard part has started. It is growing, bit by bit, as my husband does what he can on weekends. We are hoping to move eventually, when we get further down the track with building. We are living in the city of Perth at present, and are building at Bakers Hill on five acres. It is very peaceful there and we have met many people who are in the same boat. We have established a garden already and are delighted how everything is growing so well. Truly wish the house would take along those lines. I am wanting to maybe have some pets or animals to become self-sufficient. Any ideas? It is fairly rich soil and doesn't require much fertiliser – only lots of water – can be rocky in parts. Is green in winter. Hope to hear from people anywhere.

Kathy & Jim Wisbey,
PO Box 380, BAKERS HILL 6562.
or 102 Renou St, EAST CANNINGTON 6107.

Dear Editor,

Last year we placed an advertisement with your magazine regarding a **HEALING RETREAT IN THE WHITSUNDAY AREA**. Not long after, unexpected circumstances forced us to postpone the retreat and to focus on other areas of our lives. We apologise for any inconvenience to you and your subscribers this may have caused and for the lateness of our response. We do intend to open again in the near future at a different premise and look forward to advertising with you again.

Stephen Jones,
PO Box 541, CANNONVALE 4802.

Dear Grass Roots Team,

Again the **ZUCCHINI PLAGUE** has come around and trying to get rid of them, or to get your family to eat more, becomes harder each year. My brother-in-law refers to zucchini as Devils Veggies: devil of a job to eat all and devil of a job to give them away, but he still plants too many every year.

The best way I've found to get the family to eat them is to make them into casseroles, cakes, burgers and slices. Also, preserving them in vinegar with tomatoes and onion slices is popular. A friend of mine grates up zucchini with carrot and mixes it through sausage mince and makes sausage rolls with puff pastry. That way the pastry helps hide what's in it. With the casseroles etc, I freeze them for when the family has forgotten about zucchini and they eat it all before they know what is in it. Another way to hide zucchini is to peel the skin off them before cooking them.

Robyne Neal,
22 Cygnet Crt, ENCOUNTER BAY 5211.

Dear GR People,

Today while I was horseriding and again rode past the **VACANT BLOCK** up the hill, I wondered if any GR people out there might be interested in it. It is approximately 100 bush acres and has been for sale for some time, so price would probably be very negotiable. The council road, post, electricity and phone stop at our house and the block would probably be five minutes further down the road by 4WD. There is a school bus 600 metres from our house at the bottom of the hill which takes the kids to a large (700 kids) well-equipped

primary school or high school (with a farm). There are other schools not too far away, including a primary farm school, but you would have to transport the children yourself. Birralee itself doesn't have any shops but does have active social groups such as pony club, cricket club, badminton etc, and the local hall holds regular markets. Both Westbury and Exeter are about 15 minutes away and each has shopping, doctors bus service, library etc. Launceston, Tasmania's second biggest city, is about 40 minutes away – an easily commutable distance. The area around here is really pretty, good rainfall, reasonable roads and friendly people. If anybody is interested the land is being sold by LJ Hooker at Westbury (03-6393-1100). It would be great to have some more GR people nearby.

Miriam d' Mont Noir,
55 Denmans Rd, BIRRALEE 7303.

To Grass Roots Magazine,

Thanks for a **GREAT** magazine. I love it and people associated with it.

I am particularly keen to hear from anyone who knows how to successfully **GET RID OF LIZARDS IN ROOFS**. They are large black skinks – up to 30 centimetres long, and fat, and bungara-type lizards up to 60 centimetres long. They create a nuisance rattling around in our roof, but also give off an offensive odour that is worse in humid or wet weather. I have to get rid of them any way at all. Our house stinks of them sometimes. Any ideas of how to get rid of them and how to combat the lizard smell (most probably urine or droppings)?

Has anyone any experience getting a **SMALL DAM SEALED**? It has a very rocky base 10 metres wide, 20 metres long, 2-3 metres deep. It's too small a job for contractors (and too expensive!), but has the potential and needs my labour to develop it. How do GR people approach these type of projects?

Would love to hear from anyone over here developing small properties. Ours is eight acres. We have two boys 5 and 10. I'm 50 plus. Cap/Aquarian cusp. My wife is a Leo. Been married 17 years. Struggling at times, but that's life. If you don't try, then you don't know.

Warren & Virginia Curry,
20 Francais Rd, PICKERING BROOK 6076.

Dear Grass Roots Readers,

Over the past 20 years I have grown many types of tomatoes, both here in the Blue Mountains of NSW and in the tropics – Port Moresby in PNG. The best all-round tomato I have found is still Grosse Lisse, which you can buy in most stores, however, there are three varieties which I have grown here and which add variety and colour to your salad or tomato dish. They are Yellow Pear (small pear-shaped fruit), Green Zebra (very prolific, green when ripe), and Black (dark grey/red actually but very sweet). Any reader who would like a couple of **SEEDS** of any of these (while stocks last) is welcome to send a stamped, self-addressed business-size envelope (but no later than the end of November please – it's too late to plant after then anyway). Also, we have supplies of Giant Russian sunflower and Scarlet Runner beans if anyone missed out last spring/summer. Same conditions as for tomato seeds. If you have any unusual/rare tomato or bean seeds to send in exchange we would be interested.

Don Burgess,
17 Chivers Cl, LITHGOW 2790.

Dear Grass Roots Readers,

Firstly, a big thank you to all the people who wrote in for **LEG CRAMPS**. John found bananas and vinegar helped him. Now to ask another big favour. Does any reader have a way of fixing the newest fruit fly? No poisons thank you. It seems a waste of time growing anything, because this fly gets in. Thanks for a great mag and all the good reading.

V Payne,
'Avonlea Pines', 31 Tomalou L, Via TARA 4421.
An article on fruit fly control was in GR 112.



FEEDBACK LINK-UP FEEDBACK

Dear Megg & Staff,

Have been enjoying and learning from every copy of *Grass Roots* since I discovered it late 1994. Have now finally got around to subscribing. This year we intend to move from our home in the Adelaide Hills, a suburban house block, to our 50 acre property about 45 kilometres from Adelaide where we have been revegetating and planting food plants for the last 4 1/2 years. We are intending to keep poultry, possibly a cow, and to grow our own fruit and vegetables.

I am involved in the local Landcare Group – Kanmantoo/Callington and we are revegetating the roadsides to help bring back the wildlife as this area was stripped of vegetation due to mining last century.

Your magazine gives me lots of enthusiasm and know-how – keep up the good work! I would be happy to hear from other *Grass Roots* people who live around Adelaide, especially those in the city and suburbs who would like to visit a country spot like ours – like-minded people will always be welcome.

Barbara Wegener,

47 Lindsay Tce, BELAIR 5052.

Dear GR Readers,

Our **LETS SYSTEM** is working really well and growing. Should anyone be thinking of setting up a system in their area . . . do! Our experience has been that they are great. Especially if you take a more mainstream approach and have offerings from members that aren't too esoteric! Should anyone need any help then they can contact us at: Lets-Net Inc, Post Office, East Armidale 2350, or email ldt@blueprint.net.au We have also produced a starter kit for those ready to proceed.

Michael Laurent
ARMIDALE 2350.

Dear Grass Roots,

I would like to contact readers who don't like sermons, long sermons at least. I have available a variety of **ONE-MINUTE SERMONS**. Yes, that's right, they can be read in 60 seconds, in fact, one chappie said it only took him 30 seconds. These one-minute sermons still have the impact of a 30 minute sermon (or longer) and what's more, they are free – no strings attached – no need even for a stamped self-addressed envelope. But they go out only one at a time, so you won't be besieged by a mass of unwanted literature. Any time anyone would like one, simply drop a line to me.

Bruce Dunne

PO Box 30, RAYMOND TERRACE 2324.

Dear Grass Roots Folk,

Does anyone know of a recipe to make your own yoghurt from scratch? Recipes and ideas are very welcome: I made my own yoghurt some 20 years ago, but now I just cannot remember how. Great mag, thanks a lot. I'm always awaiting eagerly the next edition.

Suzanne Crompton

20 Cochran Pl, LISMORE 2480.

Instructions for making yoghurt were in GRs 99, 106 & 108.

Dear GRs,

I'm interested in old **HOME REMEDIES**. I am trying to collect as many as possible, as a keepsake to hand down. If you suffer from cramps, rub in vinegar or put camphor in the bottom of your bed.

Lyn Cole

LOWOOD 4311.

Dear GR,

I hope that you can help us! We are a retired family and have a few acres of heaven between two old churches in a secluded spot a few kilometres from town. Our problem is being able to afford to build a **SECOND HOME/SHED** that we can live in whilst we build our main house. We would love to hear from anyone who might have plans that we could use to build a small dwelling. The terrain is flat and the soil is loamy and contains no kaolin. Can kaolin be added to soil that is lacking? I don't know if we could use the soil for rammed earth or mud brick as the humidity and temperatures here are quite high. If anyone could help us, we would love to hear from you.

Dawn & Glenn,

'Elaroo', Rannock Rd, COOLAMON 2701.

Dear GR Readers,

After reading this great magazine for about a year, we have noticed many readers asking for travelling advice. We are currently on **THE GREAT AUSTRALIAN ROAD TRIP**, and would like to share a few discoveries. The first is **WOOOFing** (Willing Workers on Organic Farms). We have stayed with families in Tasmania and Western Australia and have gained many invaluable ideas and skills which we hope to utilise on our own piece of land one day. For just a few hours work a day, **WOOOFing** allows for inexpensive and rewarding travel.

Another discovery for the budget conscious traveller is the free camping guides to Tasmania and Western Australia. These booklets are readily available through tourist information centres and provide details of rest areas and some beautiful campgrounds which are authorised and free!

The opportunities for travelling throughout Australia are endless . . . so happy and safe travelling.

Belinda McNeill and David Thackeray,

34 Read Rd, SUTTON 2620.

Dear Grass Roots,

In reply to Rosemary Lyons of Beechworth: I too suffer from **CHRONIC URTICARIA** (hives) from time to time. My specialist says it's an allergy and I take **PHENERGON**. I was told it is an allergy that can be caused by some of the foods a person eats. In my case, it is pineapple.

I am seeking some prices of rhizomes of the **OLD-FASHIONED** iris-light blue/purple-yellow. I will pay for them and postage.

Thank you to Robin and Gordon Faulkner for such an interesting letter on the Pichi Richi park.

I wish Jo Porter well in taking the Great Trip. You won't regret it Jo – lots to see and do. You are far from mad, just adventurous. Call on folks for help.

Congratulations on 25 years of *Grass Roots*. I do hope you still keep publishing for years to come. It is a very informative magazine and has good sensible reading that holds one's interest. It is a great publication.

Mrs P Kavanagh,

2 York Rd, BUDERIM 4556.

To Grass Roots,

I was wondering if anybody could help me with a plan for setting up a **MANUAL FLOUR MILL** attached to a bicycle to grind flour.

L Brown,

'Wokolene' WARRUMBUNGLE 2828.

Dear Readers,

For many years I have had a strong desire to live in **TASMANIA** and two short holidays have only whetted my appetite. I would like to correspond with anyone who has had first-hand experience, both positive and negative, of moving to and living in Tasmania. We are interested in a country/self-sufficient lifestyle, but would also like to hear from city/town folk, as well, as this is usually where the work is. My husband, a hardworking, talented boilermaker, is very concerned about the employment situation and being able to provide for his family (we have two small children). I am a teacher and would ideally like part-time work. We both love the diversity, natural beauty and atmosphere of Tasmania, but are reluctant to make the break, as we don't want to risk the little financial security we have. If anyone would care to write (or email - mdigby@internetnorth.com.au) and share their experiences I would be most grateful, but please no get-rich-quick schemes.

Melissa,

C/- PO Box 628, MALANDA 4885.

Anonymous letters will not be published. Please indicate if you would like personal details to be withheld.

DRYING RACK FOR FLEECE OR GARMENT

by Ina & Keith Sangster, Tennyson, SA.

The traditional clean towel on the domestic lawn used to dry washed fleeces or garments has some drawbacks that can be avoided by making a drying rack to be hung above the ground – allowing air through the fleece or garment – with a cover to prevent them being disturbed by wind.

One such rack that has proved successful was made as follows:

- Obtain a total of 4 metres of 20 mm (internal measurement) PVC waterpipe, cut into two lengths of 1.2 metres each and two lengths of 70 centimetres each. Obtain four 20 mm PVC elbows to match the pipe. Fit into a rectangle and check before glueing with a little PVC glue.
- Obtain 1 metre of 84 centimetre black nylon bird mesh and fasten a little

less than one half of the mesh to the pipe rectangle, leaving the larger portion protruding from one of the longer sides.

- Obtain 70 centimetres of 20 mm wooden rod (or a broom handle) and attach it to the outside edge of the protruding mesh. This will then fold back over the top of the rectangle and hang down a few centimetres on the other side, providing the top mesh cover.

The finished product may be hung by cords or by metal hooks, and may be moved indoors or outdoors without disturbing the fleece or garment.

Reprinted from *Guild News*, the newsletter of the Handspinners and Weavers Guild of South Australia Incorporated. For enquiries about the Guild's activities contact: The Secretary, PO Box 163, Torrenville 5031.

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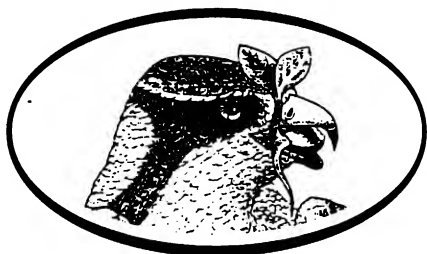
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BioDiversity

When you think about it, it is really amazing the way all living things – humans, animals, plants and microbes – all



sity of life may not be around for the benefit of people in the future.

live together and are able to enjoy food, shelter, clean air and water and beauty. Biodiversity is a big word that describes this. The problem these days is that through many actions of humans, such as chopping down trees and polluting the rivers, oceans and air, we are losing many species of animals and plants. If this keeps happening, the fantastic biodiversity of life may not be around for the benefit of people in the future.

BOOK REVIEW The Cherry Dress

by Elizabeth Honey



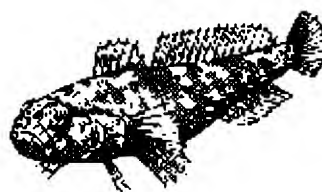
This delightful picture book describes the recycled life of a young girl's special dress. As each child grows out of the dress and its cherry pattern fades, it is still happily received by another. A simple and meaningful recycling tale for children with Elizabeth Honey's distinctive line and wash drawings to accompany it.

P/b, Little Ark, Allen & Unwin, RRP \$9.95.

RECYCLING

Kids Can Help Protect Biodiversity

Recycling is putting things to further use. That is, to use things again and again or make them into something else. Recycling means less resources – materials and energy – have to be used to make new things and so there is less pressure on the natural environment and the biodiversity it contains. The more times you can use



something, the less new items have to be made.

Here is a list of some of the ways kids can easily recycle. Try them and also think of other ways of recycling the things you use.

1. Collect stuff and take it down to your local kindergarten or playgroup – all sorts of boxes; rolls from kitchen wraps; leftover fabrics; washed milk cartons; old catalogues and mags; used gift wrap and cards; ice cream tubs; egg cartons.



2. Make sensational artwork. Keep interesting scraps of paper, boxes, egg cartons, anything interesting in a 'useful box' a big cardboard box filled with this stuff ready to use at any moment of inspiration.

3. Look in op shops for clothes you like and also toys, dress-ups, books, things for your cubby house.

4. Use already used paper for drawing on – ask your parents, friends and relatives if they have scrap paper from their work.

5. Make your own gift paper and cards by painting/decorating newspaper or any other already used paper.

6. Give your old clothes, toys, books etc to smaller children you know or a local charitable op shop.



IN THE KITCHEN

There's nothing like walking into a warm kitchen on a cold day and being greeted by the aroma of something delicious simmering slowly away on the back of the stove. Welcome friends and family with hearty soups and rich stews, fragrant with herbs and spices, which make the most of inexpensive meats.

Most cheap cuts of meat, game and culled birds are flavoursome but need to be cooked over a long time to ensure tenderness. For those whose wood heater is combined with a cook top, using one source of energy for two purposes makes even more sense. If using an oven, the long cooking time allows a dessert pie or pudding to be cooked at the same time.

There are several methods that can be employed to turn tough cuts into tasty dinners.

MARINADES

Marinades help to tenderise and add flavour to meat or poultry and the oil base prevents the meat from drying out. To an oil base, add your choice of herbs, spices, garlic, ginger, wine, vinegar, orange or lemon juice, condiments, sauces, or tomato paste. Acidic ingredients, such as vinegar, citrus juice or tomato paste, help tenderise the meat. The meat is coated with the marinade, and must be left for a minimum of several hours, but preferably overnight. Your choice of ingredients for a marinade can also impart a specific regional flavour, for example, a marinade that uses sesame oil, rice wine, ginger, honey, soy sauce or chilli is a great start for a Chinese meal. Some marinades are then also added to the dish towards the end of the cooking process to contribute to the richness of the final sauce/gravy.

SLOW COOKING

Slow cooking, such as braising, pot-roasts, and casseroles will bring out the best in a cheap cut of meat. All three of these methods of cooking require a suitable pot or casserole dish with a tight fitting lid. Unlike casseroles and braising, pot roasts require a pot deep enough to cook meat kept in one large piece, which is suitable for top of the stove cooking. The joint is browned first, then placed in the pot with root vegetables, seasoning and herbs, and a small amount of stock or wine. Ensure that the lid does not come into contact with the top of

the meat, as this will cause the meat to dry out. Cook over slow heat for 2 - 3 hours, turning it once or twice during the process. Old fowl can also be cooked successfully using this method.

OTHER METHODS

The use of a pressure cooker will reduce the time taken to transform tough into tender. Meat mincers can be employed to produce versatile ingredients for stuffing vegetables or making pies, pasta sauces etc.



CHEAP MEATS

Cheaper cuts of meat include lamb shanks, mutton, shin, oxtail, scrag end of neck, and offal such as heart, tongue and liver.

Oxtail Soup

- 1 oxtail cut into lengths between the bones
- 2 onions
- 2 carrots
- 2 leeks
- 2 stalks of celery
- 3 cloves garlic
- handful of fresh herbs
- bay leaf
- 8 peppercorns
- beef stock or water
- margarine or oil for frying
- flour to thicken
- Worcestershire sauce
- parsley for garnish

Fry meat and chopped vegies until browned. Add stock, cover and simmer slowly until meat is tender (about 3½ hours). Remove the oxtail and strain soup into a bowl. Leave until cold and then remove the fat from the meat, and the meat from the bones. Skim the fat from the surface of the soup. Blend the flour with a little liquid from the soup, stir into the

rest of the soup and bring to the boil. Stir until the soup thickens. Return meat to soup and add Worcestershire sauce. Adjust seasoning if necessary. Serve piping hot with parsley garnish.

Greek-style Mutton

1 kg mutton, cut into large, thin slices cut across the grain, marinated for several hours in oil, lemon juice, pepper and garlic

12 sml pickling onions, peeled but kept whole

- 6 cloves garlic, crushed
- 500 ml tomato puree
- two or three cups red wine
- strips lemon peel
- 1 lge carrot, grated
- handful fresh herbs

Drain mutton from marinade and brown with the onions and garlic. Add wine and then tomato puree, herbs, lemon peel and grated carrot. Simmer gently for 2 - 3 hours (until meat is tender), stirring occasionally to prevent from sticking. Sauce should be thick when ready to eat, but during cooking process can be thinned out with a little water if it thickens too quickly.

Lamb Shanks in Caper Sauce

- 4 lamb shanks
- several small pickling onions per person, peeled and left whole
- 1 tbsp butter
- 1 tbsp flour
- ½ cup milk
- ½ cup stock
- 1 cup white wine
- capers to taste (chopped)
- handful chopped parsley
- cayenne pepper to taste

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Cover shanks with water and the cup of white wine. Soak for one hour then simmer with onions until meat is tender. Pour off and keep the rich mutton stock. Remove meat from the bone and place in casserole with onions. Make a white sauce with the butter, flour, milk and stock. Add capers to taste, about 2 tbsp, a little of their liquid, the parsley and pour over meat. Reheat and serve.

CULLED AND CAUGHT

Other sources of cheap protein include culled fowl and food we catch ourselves, such as fish and rabbits. If you can catch them yourself, rabbits are a cheap and delicious source of meat. And because they are an environmental pest, you can feel quite virtuous while you eat them! Rabbits can be either jointed before cooking or cooked whole in a large casserole dish. The advantage of cooking rabbits whole is that the risk of small bones splintering during the process is removed. Before cooking, rabbits can be soaked in salted water for a couple of hours. After cooking the meat should be tender and separating from the bone. Many rabbit recipes call for the addition of streaky bacon. Rabbits are lean meat, and bacon helps prevent the meat from drying out or becoming stringy.

Rabbit and Prune Casserole

1 - 2 rabbits, jointed
seasoned flour
1 onion, chopped
3 cloves garlic, crushed
2 rashers bacon
2 carrots, chopped
2 stalks celery, chopped
6 pitted prunes, halved
1 large glass red wine stock
oil
handful of fresh mixed herbs, including 2 bay leaves
pepper to taste

Coat rabbit pieces with seasoned flour and place in the bottom of a casserole dish. Fry onions and garlic until soft, add carrot and celery and stir until coated with the oil. Deglaze fried ingredients with the wine, add stock and bring to the boil. Turn off heat and add herbs, prunes and pepper. Pour this mixture over rabbit pieces (the stock should not completely cover them) and lay bacon on the top. Cover with lid and bake until meat is separating from the

bone. The time for this will vary depending on the age and size of the rabbits. This dish can also be cooked as a stew on top of the wood stove.

To improve the tenderness of culled older fowl, rub the prepared bird with lemon juice, wrap in buttered paper and steam for 2 - 3 hours.



CULLED CUISINE

From time to time fowls have to be culled to make room for younger, and more productive stock. What then can you do with the old birds as they will be too tough to roast? Italian friends are always happy to take culls as they have a successful way of cooking them so the meat is tasty and appealing. Exactly how much of the different ingredients you use is unimportant, you can follow the recipe exactly or add in vegies like mushrooms, carrots or even garlic.

1-2 culled chooks
1 large onion
1/2 tsp paprika
basil or parsley to taste
olive oil
jar or tin of tomato paste
salt and pepper

Bone out the fowl, cutting meat into reasonable sized pieces. Set aside. Slice onion and fry in oil until just golden, add chicken pieces and seal the outside without actually browning the meat. Remove from heat, season with salt, pepper and paprika, stir in tomato paste. Put back onto low heat and gently simmer for one hour or until tender.

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The tomato paste should reduce down to make a thick sauce. Ensure there is sufficient liquid during cooking or the mixture may burn and meat dry out. Add diced herbs and serve.



MUESLI MAN

Muesli was first developed by the Swiss doctor Bircher-Benner about 90 years ago. He had become convinced of the curative powers of raw fruit and vegetables and his formula for muesli was developed to be a complete meal in itself. He felt that it was important for sick people to under rather than over eat and it was served several times a day to his patients.

STOP POTATOES SPROUTING

To suppress the sprouting of potatoes in storage, put sprigs of either English lavender, pennyroyal, spearmint, rosemary or sage with the potatoes in sealed containers. Greek research in this area found that there was a sixty percent reduction in sprouting levels when potatoes were stored with herbs (reported in *Herb Thymes Newsletter No 5 1997*).

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CHOOSING THE RIGHT BLOCK

by Ann James, Earlville, Qld.

Although I am a city girl, for as long as I can remember, I've had an affinity with the land. As a child I was lucky enough to experience the joys of country life each school holidays on my aunt and uncle's dairy farm in north-eastern Tasmania. It was there my love of the land blossomed and I realised it was the lifestyle I wanted on a permanent basis. But alas, the holidays always came to an end and I found myself back in the city. I've had to wait almost half a lifetime, but I'm finally out of the city and enjoying the peace of the bush. There are a few things I wish I had considered before choosing our block, however, of course it wasn't until I moved and began speaking to others in the area that I realised some common problems.

I would like to share my findings with those of you currently considering a purchase, to help make your transition as smooth as possible. Your dream is possible, but you need to be aware of exactly what you want before you begin.

HOUSE-SIT

I would strongly recommend that anyone currently considering a move try to house-sit a property in the area they are interested in before they do anything else. It sounds difficult, but will be well worth the trouble. There are always people in country areas looking for house-sitters. Arm yourself with as many references as possible: personal references are easy to get, character references from local businesses, your place of employment, financial institutions etc. Place ads in local newspapers and in shop windows.

You will find actually living in the area will give you a good feel for it and any hardships will quickly come to your attention, as will your ability to handle them. You will get a clearer idea of places to steer clear of; the ones best to focus on; whether you can cope with the extra travelling necessary, whether it be to and from work or in general; isolation; extra mowing and weeding; the hassles of water pumps, irrigation equipment, livestock, and on and on.



ISOLATION

My main area for concern for a long while was isolation. Are you or your children used to having people around? If so, then perhaps look at a small acreage or one with a neighbour in view. Just being able to see a neighbouring house, albeit in the distance, is sometimes comforting, especially if you are aged, infirmed, or have children. If you are isolated, or the property is too large, where do you go for help if you need it?

TRANSPORT

Does your spouse work? If so, do you have two cars? Being home alone all day and with no neighbours can be a little traumatic. Just to have a spare vehicle and be able to get into town in case of emergency can be very reassuring. At one stage there was a pretty decent sized fire on my boundary and I watched in horror as it came up to our houseyard fence before the wind died down and it mercifully stopped in its tracks. The lack of neighbours to call on, or a vehicle to make an escape, could pose problems.

Do you have school-age children? Consider the time and cost of fuel involved in transporting them to school and social functions every day. Can you afford either?

Another aspect well worth your consideration, especially if a member of your family has to commute to work, is whether any section of road around you is

prone to be cut in wet weather due to flooding or landslide. A lot of small bridges and gullies go under very easily in wet weather and if you live in mountainous country, rockslides and landslides are always a possibility. Talk to the locals, a real estate agent isn't going to volunteer any detrimental information.

MAKING A LIVING

What do you want from your property? If it has to return you an income make sure the property is large enough. Check how many cattle per acre the area is getting; how many acres is really necessary to make a living from fruit trees, vegetables, or whatever it might be. You might be surprised. It is no good buying 30 acres only to find 60 would have been more viable, or buying 60 only to find you really can't be bothered and five could have been easier to keep.

Most of all, go for it. Life out here is terrific!

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ORGANIC HYDROPONICS THAT WORKS

by Terry Weaver, Tamworth, NSW.

Growing their own crispy, nutritious vegetables or beautiful plants is a satisfying endeavour that links people from all walks of life. There is nothing more rewarding than eating home-grown vegetables or displaying home-grown flowers.

It is to people's credit that a large band of growers have resisted a chemical component in their growing, or have minimised chemical applications. However, space often restricts the options of people who live in units or have small yards. As a result, I have developed a system of organic hydroponics. The concept of hydroponics is quite a brilliant idea – even ancient Egyptians farmed this way, growing their produce on rafts in the river.

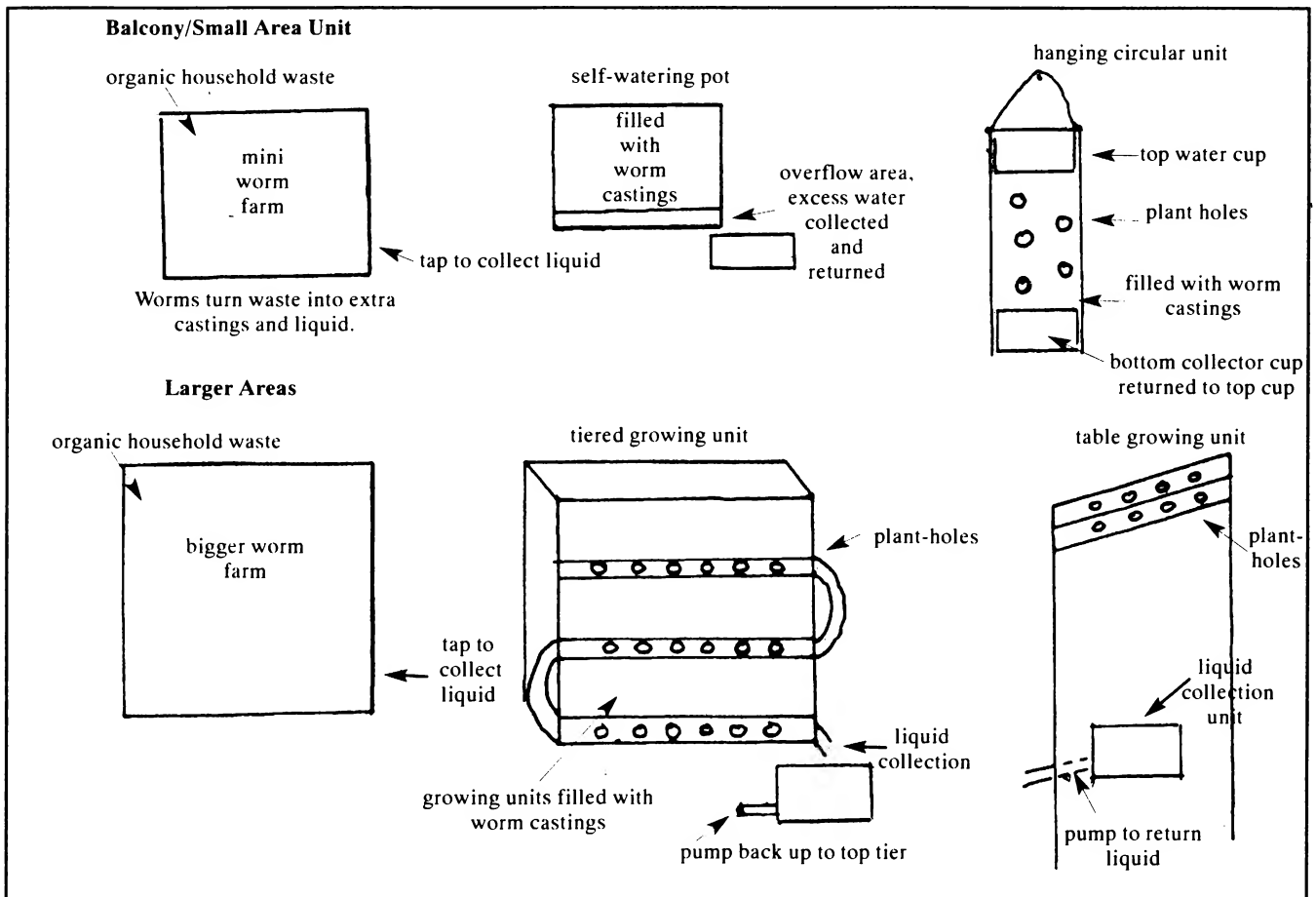
Unfortunately, as with many good ideas, branches of science and agricul-

ture look it over and began to grow spectacularly large crops in small spaces. To do this they created chemicals to act as nutrients for the plants. As soon as this happened, a relatively simple idea turned into an exact science with various chemicals being used to regulate the plants' needs. If, for example, the pH of the nutrient solution becomes too alkaline, acid is added to compensate. So, with the idea of organic hydroponics in mind, I started experimenting over five years ago. Most of the experiments were successful, however, triumphs were on a hit and miss basis.

My wife and I run a worm farm as well, so I decided to plant seeds in small units, make up a mixture for the bed and put worms in it. The idea being that while the worms were eating the household

waste, compost etc, the plants could obtain the nutrients they needed and we would have a truly living environment. Unfortunately this experiment was only partly successful. Some plants went well, others struggled, while a lot died. Then, as with all good ideas, the simple solution came. Not only was it simple but reduction in unrecycled household waste was considerable. All it took was a separate mini worm farm to manufacture the solid and liquid castings. These nutrients were then mixed to our formula and used as the growing medium.

Another bonus was that labour was reduced to almost zero. Complementing the ideas is the benefit that anything can be grown in the system: flowers, vegetables, bushes and trees. At the moment I have two guava trees growing in a limited space



in garbage bins, both doing very well. To top it all off, this organic hydroponic system can be adapted from very small units right up to commercial growing. It is also the only unit that increases the nutrient content while it is in use. Imagine never having to buy any type of fertiliser again, while never having to worry about pH etc. In any large or commercial enterprise where substantial quantities of organic waste exist (dairies, piggeries, lawn farms), savings can be made in costs of waste disposal and fertilisers. Personalised units can be supplied for physically disabled gardeners. Units can be hanging, bench design or on the ground.

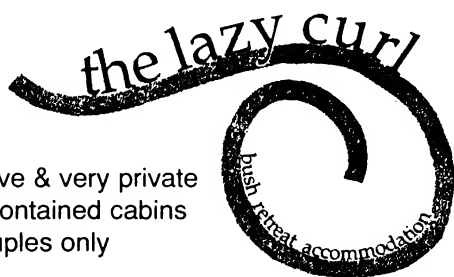
To my knowledge, there are no other units where the nutrient content increases over the growing period of the plants. In most commercial hydroponic units growing medium is discarded after a few uses, which harms the environment. With our system, the discarded medium actually enriches the soil, without burning delicate plants.

Recently the New South Wales government has legislated that at least 70 percent of organic waste currently being dumped will not be allowed into the tips. In the not too distant future, this will attract high charges. This regulation should be regarded as an opportunity that will actually give all people the power to grow their own vegetables in as little space as possible, no matter what their circumstances.

For more information, ph: Terry Weaver, 02-6760-8453.

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Professor EO Wilson, scientist and writer



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GARDEN BOUNTY

Apples

by Cheryl Beasley, Karalee, Qld.

Apple trees need to be cross-pollinated so make sure there is a friend within striking distance. They require a rich well drained soil and a position in full sun for maximum fruiting.

Apple trees should be pruned to keep them a good size and shape for harvesting and when pests occur spray with a garlic or rhubarb spray. Growing nasturtiums and garlic under apple trees will help deter pests.

Apple flesh and juice benefit most skin types and are very soothing and refreshing on the skin.

APPLE AND GLYCERINE TONER

(dry skin)

1/2 cup apple juice

1/2 cup water

1/2 tsp glycerine

Combine all the ingredients in a bottle and shake vigorously. Use after cleansing.

REFRESHING APPLE PACK

(all skin types)

1 chopped apple

1 tbsp milk

1 tbsp ground oatmeal

Boil the apple until it turns to pulp and remove from heat, allow to cool and mix in the milk and oatmeal. Spread evenly over the face and leave it on for twenty minutes. Rinse off with cool water.



APPLE SHAMPOO

1 tbsp baby shampoo

2 tbsp apple juice

Simple whisk the ingredients together and massage into wet hair. Rinse thoroughly and condition as normal.

FRESH APPLE RINSE

(dandruff)

1 cup fresh apple juice

3 cups cool water

Combine the two ingredients and pour through the hair after shampooing and conditioning. Massage into the scalp well and do not rinse out. Use this rinse weekly to control dandruff.

APPLE FOR SPOTTY SKIN

Apple is great for adolescents as it helps control oily skin and spots. Use grated apple as a face pack or apply juice daily as a toner.



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LAVENDER BLUE

by Mary White, Epping, Vic.

I thought I would tell you about my life in Australia and the UK. I was born in east London in 1945 and grew up there until I was married at 24. Then I moved twice in the next few years to Essex and Surrey. I came to Australia in 1974 when I was 29, with my husband Brian, my daughter Sara 11 months, and my son Terry three. I had another son Ben in 1977.

GARDENING IN THE UK

My first experience with the soil was when I was six. I used to follow the milkman's horse around a couple of blocks in Manor Park London to collect horse manure. I would sell the horse manure for sixpence a bucket. With the sixpence I would buy a loaf of second day old bread and take it home to my mother. This sense of achievement stayed with me all my life. I felt quite pleased with myself. I also grew rhubarb and used the horse manure to grow it. I got huge stalks of rhubarb and I would sell them too for a few pence.

In our garden in England we grew blackberries. Yes, blackberries. Cultivated blackberries can be huge. We grew carrots, radish, lettuce, tomato, beetroot and, would you believe it, stinging nettles and weeds.

Stinging nettles make a wonderful tea for the blood. They also make a good feed for young seedlings. Steep nettles in a bucket of water for a week or two and then dilute and water seedlings and pot plants. It makes them grow very well. All our weeds go into a big bucket for making liquid fertiliser. Compost can be added to the bucket of weeds too.

AUSTRALIAN GARDENING

When I came to Australia my love of gardening grew. The growing season in Australia is all year round for vegies of some description. You can have flowers all year round if you plant carefully. My garden now has thyme, marjoram, peppermint, rosemary, chives, sage, sil-



Above: Lavender is dominant amongst the low shrubbery in the front garden.
Below: The mulched back garden is vibrant with colourful flowers, complemented by silver foliage.



ver beet and lettuce. I have planted lots of wormwood along my back fence and this provides a good herbi-

cide as well as a backdrop for showing off roses, bottlebrush, daisies, plumbago and grevilleas.



The vegie and herb garden is set amidst flowering shrubs and guarded by Mr Scarecrow.

throw over the fence and have gleaned no end of plants from this source. I collect pine needles to make pathways. They smell wonderful after rain and with the sun on them. They're also good weed inhibitors.

I have heaps and heaps of *Lavandula allardi* in my front garden, hence the name of our house: Lavender Blue. Our lavender flowers for four months and the prunings make wonderful mulch around the lavender bushes. It's a good calming influence around the house. Lavender, roses, daisies and geraniums are a good combination, all requiring minimal water use.

I recycle my grey water from the laundry by pumping it into an old silo bin and then gravity feed it to the gar-

den. I use pure soap. The washing and rinsing water is collected in the silo bin before it goes on the garden and filtered through the mulch. I don't use it for herbs or vegies, but at a push I suppose I could.

In the time I have been in Australia I have been a day care mother, looking after maybe fifty children over a period of fifteen years, and my garden has been a saving grace, saving me from insanity. I have propagated hundreds of plants from my garden for fetes. I have planted trees along the Darebin Creek with other people and they are 10 metres tall now.

My husband Brian has worked long night shift hours, so the garden was necessary for work and play so he could get some sleep during the day.

Brian helps me with pruning and when the children were young he would amuse them if I was busy. We had some great picnics on the old railway property with the children when they were young. There was a large waterhole that we would sit around and the children would have a stick with a hook and a piece of dough on it and we would fish in the waterhole. We never caught anything, but it was relaxing.

I have been in Australia nearly twenty-five years and have been a *Grass Roots* reader since the 1970s and have learnt a lot of things. I especially enjoyed Megg's stories about the livestock and her daughter Suni. My children are grown up and only Ben lives at home with us.

We have everything we need for body and soul and our quality of life is good. We have a Silky Terrier called Mitzie and I walk her every day around the neighbourhood and look at people's gardens to see what grows well.

When the children were growing up, we bred budgies, quails, finches and guinea pigs and the money from this paid for the children's books and for small holidays in Victoria.

I don't regret ever coming to Australia and have picked my resting place. I only wished our parents and extended family had come with us. I hope I can garden in some way all my life, even if it's just pot plants. A suburban garden is home for people, native birds, lizards, worms, insects. I always wanted acreage, but I would rather have a well kept garden than acreage I could not look after. Well keep to your grass roots folks and life will always be rosy.



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WEIRD WINDOW?

COVER IT WITH A VERTICAL BLIND

by Ron McBeth, Wapengo, NSW.

Many GR readers building homes or sheds with irregular shaped windows/doors may find some inspiration in the following way to cover them. Before moving to the beautiful south coast of NSW I lived and had a sculptor's studio in a wonderful turn-of-the-century brick and stone abandoned electrical substation in the heart of urban Sydney, Woolloomooloo. What a contrast.

The space was six metres high and at a high level in the north-facing side walls there were two not quite semicircular windows approximately 1.5 metres diameter and 90 centimetres high. They were bottom hinged Australian cedar casement windows that supplied light and great updraft air control. But how to provide, air and privacy to a mezzanine level?

By scrounging around my workshop I located all materials except for the coloured 50 percent fibreglass shade-cloth which I purchased. Items needed as shown in the sketch are:

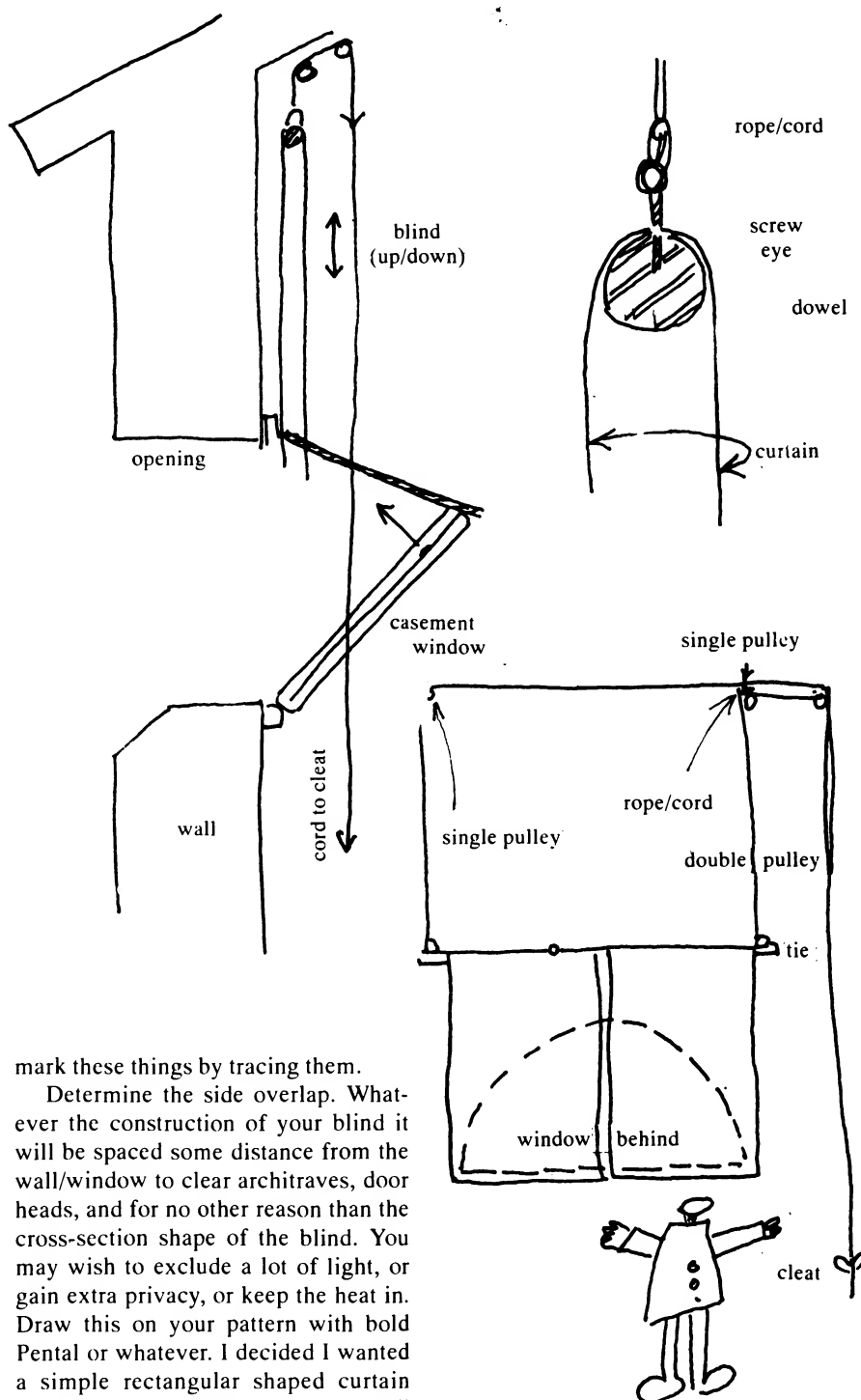
- dowel
- curtain material
- rope or sashcord (nonstretching)
- 3 pulleys
- tie-off cleat
- 2 eyebolts and 2 coach hooks
- 1 cleat

All these can be store bought, or, depending on your time and ingenuity, handmade. Naturally, modify the design to suit the materials to hand and no doubt improve the design.

CONSTRUCTION

I measured the window opening and, on large sheets of paper made from glued together newspaper, I drew a full-size diagram of the opening and a centre opening screw which necessitated a vertical cut in the blind. Do not cut the pattern out yet.

Now think through what fittings or obstacles may be on or around your window, such as door knobs or access to a window catch, possibly requiring an access hole. If necessary, pin your pattern over the opening and physically



mark these things by tracing them.

Determine the side overlap. Whatever the construction of your blind it will be spaced some distance from the wall/window to clear architraves, door heads, and for no other reason than the cross-section shape of the blind. You may wish to exclude a lot of light, or gain extra privacy, or keep the heat in. Draw this on your pattern with bold Pental or whatever. I decided I wanted a simple rectangular shaped curtain which had 10 centimetres overlap all round – making the overall dimensions

a simple rectangular shaped curtain which had 10 centimetres overlap all round – making the overall dimensions 170 x 110 centimetres. If you are confident and know all the overlaps, foldovers and whatever you can cut the fabric to size; if not, then do the next step first.

Decide how you are going to support your creation. I used an 18 millimetre diameter timber dowel as a top support, 180 centimetres long (5 cm extension past the blind on each side) and wrapped the shade cloth over it, giving a double layer (I'm guessing) of 90 percent light/sight exclusion. The shade cloth was stapled to the dowel on the top. The two sides simply hung loose as they were reasonably heavy and were not fixed together, so they could float and catch the breeze.

So you have the curtain fixed to the support rod and you have cut the rod to length and maybe at long last the curtain cut out to your pattern.

How do we make this thing go up and down? I fixed a small 25 millimetre diameter eyebolt 25 millimetres in from each end of the support rod. I then checked the eyebolt centre to centre measurement and transferred this to the wall and ceiling, spacing it equally either side of my opening.

I then fixed a good solid coach screw hook to the ceiling timber at these points and hung a pulley from the hook. Make sure the pulley diameter is larger rather than smaller as it will be easier to operate. Also ensure the pulley wheel suits the rope/cord diameter. Any hardware store can match these for you.

Now fix the rope to the support rod eyes with a good solid bowline knot and temporarily fix the blind roughly in the up position by grabbing some helping hands or bits of string. Carry the rope from each eye up and through the pulley above, across to a third pulley to one side, and down to where you want to control this apparatus. Both ropes may be taken down to the tie-off point (cleat/dowel in post etc) and tied together. I tied them together at a high level, carrying only one rope down. The length of rope can be substantial and it is expensive, so work all this out first before you buy, and especially before you cut, as joining knots will not usually go through pulleys. I had 12 metres of rope per blind, so there is lots of it.

You may find after it has been up for a while that the blind may settle down to one side or the other, so just adjust the ropes by adjusting the knot where

the two separate cords come together.

SOME EXTRA TIPS

- First and foremost make sure you have all the materials to hand so that you can see what compromises and adjustments may be needed in advance. Remember, measure twice and cut once.

- You need at least the same height above the opening, plus a bit more for pulleys etc, than the height of the opening.

- If your window/door is sliding or bottom hinged it's easy, but if it is side hung (most doors) or top hung it will require cutting back on the hinge side.

- Always tie the two cords to the horizontal dowel first, level dowel in down position and then tie together.

- Ensure the pulleys have adequate fixing to timber or structural members, not plaster sheeting or such. It may be wise to install the pulleys first before you cut the dowel and finalise position of eyes.

- Always do a bit of a test on the dowel to make sure it will carry the blind material without too much deflection and, if in doubt, go one bigger!

It all sounds very involved, but is not really if you make it fun and a work of art carrying out a real function. Good imagineering!

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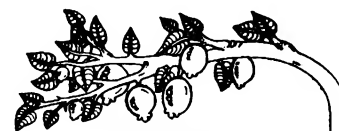
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TERMITES

EARLY WARNING SYSTEMS

by Jack Ross, Port Macquarie, NSW.

'... outside the capital cities, one in five Australian houses will be invaded by termites.'

In our mobile society it is not unusual for a family to have lived in more than one house during the course of a working lifetime. Some studies show that an average working class family may shift place of residence six times over a period of about 40 years. This article relates to my experience as an engineer whose work involved transfer to towns spread over three states, resulting in the occupation of four houses over a period of 50 years until retirement when I purchased my fifth home in a coastal town. Three of the houses were in areas heavily infested with termites and, after an experience with the first home, I soon learned the importance of having an early warning system to detect termite presence close to the building. Several months after taking up residence in the first home, which had been erected only two months before occupation, I noticed that the three wooden paling fences which enclosed the property from the neighbours were all infested with termites. Many palings, rails and posts required replacement. On approaching neighbours about having a pest control expert eradicate the pests with a chemical termiticide, all vehemently opposed the employment of poisons in any form to deal with the problem, fearing for the safety of their children.

When it was pointed out to one of the neighbours that termite mud tracks could be seen leading from the ground, up the house stumps and into the floorboards of the house, the owner dealt with the problem by applying a solution, using a hand sprayer, of boiled-up cabbage leaves which he had for use on the vegetable garden.

After giving the matter a lot of thought, I decided to install a termite early warning system in order to detect the presence of the insects should they venture close to the house.

I approached the problem by first making a list of the desirable character-

istics which such a system should possess:

- Lure material should comprise substances which would be an attractive food source for termites.

- Lure material should be sufficiently long lasting so that termites would remain working on the material to cover an inspection cycle of a three to four month interval.

- The lure and immediate area should be automatically maintained sufficiently moist to provide a fungal decay environment.

- The lure should be maintained in a dark environment.

- Inspection should be simple, with the lure being able to be inspected visually to detect the presence of termites.

- The system should be simple to install and employ low cost materials.

- The system should give some indication of the likely direction of the colony if termites are active in the lure.

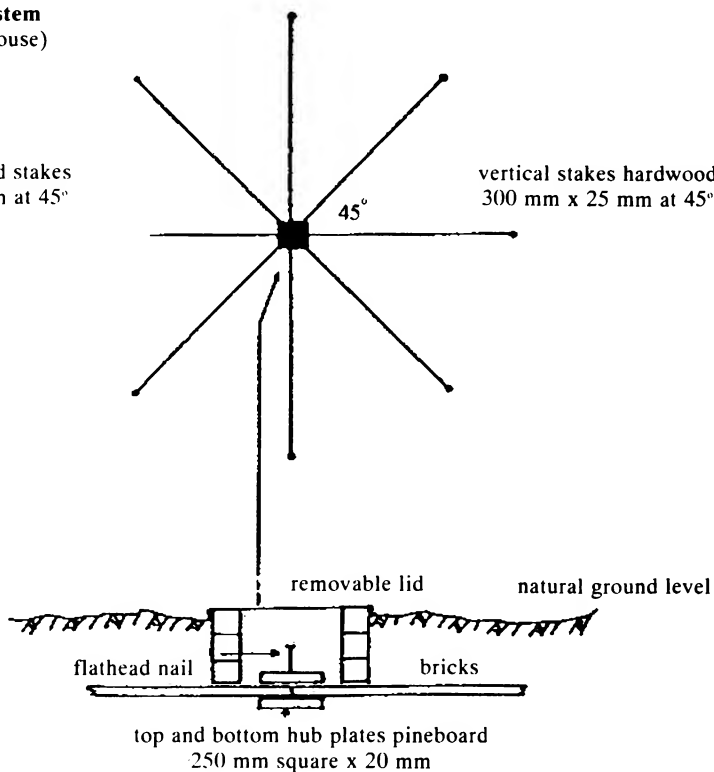
WHEEL SYSTEM

Over a period of years and following success with the first system, I installed early warning systems at two other homes, modifying each from lessons learned with previous installations. The first system, identified as the 'wheel system', installed in a house in Queensland, comprised four units with one unit being installed adjacent to each of the four sides of the house. Each unit was constructed in the shape of a rimless wheel with a hub and eight spokes spaced 45 degrees apart with the wheel being buried in excavated trenches to a depth of 200 mm. Each spoke was a standard hardwood garden

Wheel System
(four per house)

eight hardwood stakes
1.8 m x 25 mm at 45°

vertical stakes hardwood
300 mm x 25 mm at 45°



stake about 25 mm square and 1.8 m in length. The rim end of each spoke was nailed to a stake of similar material which had been driven into the undisturbed soil to a depth of about 300 mm. The hub comprised two square sections of old pineboard about 250 mm square and 20 mm thickness. One hub plate was placed on the ground and each spoke nailed onto it. The other hub just rested on the stakes directly over the one placed on the soil. A protruding roofing nail was fixed to the top hub plate to enable it to be easily lifted up for inspection purposes.

Standard house bricks were laid around the hub and so finished the project above the surrounding ground level by about 25 mm.

A lid was made from sheet galvanised iron with 25 mm turned-down sides to provide a neat fit over the bricks and to keep out light. The lid was painted white so it could be easily seen. Units were located in positions about midway along each side of the house stumps, with the hub being about four metres out.

I implemented an inspection sched-

ule of four-month intervals and after 13 months termites were detected in one of the units. An examination showed that the termites reached the hub via one of the hardwood spokes which pointed towards a heavily infested fence post. I dug a trench and applied a termiticide in accordance with directions before back-filling the trench. An inspection of the stake and hub six weeks later indicated all activity had ceased.

Seven weeks later, infestation in another unit on the opposite side of the house was observed. The source was easily located so I was satisfied that the installation had been worthwhile.

Next time I'll describe my second system, the 'modified herringbone system'.

See GRs 77, 88 & 99 for more information on safe methods of termite control.

POSTAGE PLEASE

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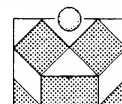
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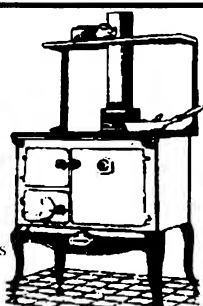
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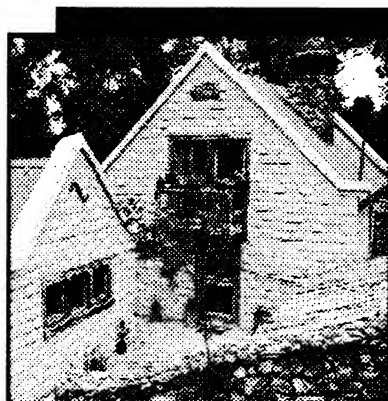
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MAKING MORE THINGS HAPPEN

by Pamela & Herman Odijk, Caboolture, NSW, en route to goodness knows where!

'Always behave like a duck,' so the saying goes, 'remain calm and unruffled on the surface – but paddle like the devil underneath'. It's good advice if you can stick to it.

We have been trying to keep this in mind as we make more things happen in our lives. And we are somewhat bemused, but flattered, that GR readers are interested in our lives up to GR 100, and what we have done since. Lots of GR people have caught up with us in person from time to time and we have made some wonderful friends. The nicest thing about these friends is that they don't think we're crazy, as their lives are usually far from 'run of the mill' too. We are only crazy to the mainstreamers.

At issue number 100 we had bought a house in Mount Morgan after having sold our nine-acre organic orchard and small crops property. We then sold our adjacent five-acre organic orchard and bought the house next door as an investment. Although the self-sufficiency lifestyle on our first property (after leaving Sydney) near Kempsey, NSW, and then at Struck Oil near Mount Morgan was fun, it was also very hard work. Now in our fifties we decided to find new alternatives.

To the Great South-East of Queensland

Teaching and studying is always with us. It is part of my work as a freelance writer and author and part of Herman's as a teacher and author. The studying and writing we can do almost anywhere, but teaching jobs for Herman became impossible to find in central Queensland. We decided to pack up, rent the house out, and move to the south-east of the state (closer to Pam's elderly parents and other family) to seek opportunities.

Initially, Herman was busy doing casual teaching at a business academy and teaching other allied business courses (eg, 'Turning Your Hobby Into a Business' and 'Reducing Your Tax', 'How to Write a Business Plan', etc) at various TAFE colleges. Then he was appointed principal of a new business college. His job was to get the college up and running with accredited courses and hire qualified staff. It took him only eight months to have it up and running with successful tenders in hand and the first intake of 70 students, much to the surprise of the relevant government departments.

However, new government regulations made it clear that if he wished to

continue teaching business courses anywhere from 1998, he needed to have a post graduate teaching qualification additional to his Post Graduate Diploma in Taxation and his BA. As his job at the college was done, he embarked on a year's full-time external study and completed a Post Graduate Diploma in Further Education and Training – plus writing another three books for teachers along the way.

Some Setbacks

I have been no slouch either, but have been less successful in some ways. I was asked to write 15 historical fiction booklets for a Sydney publisher who then reneged on the deal and left me high and dry. As it would have cost me the same amount in legal fees as I could claim in compensation, this has caused other problems which have not yet been resolved.

Then, I was asked by someone else to write 18 economics booklets for business students and agreed to take on the task. I even enrolled in a Post Graduate Diploma in Economics to update my knowledge. But his deal fell through – and I withdrew from the course. (It's not the sort of thing you do for recreation.)



Pam and Herman Odijk integrating with nature in the new location on Bribie Island.

And Achievements

While Herman has been studying, I have been working on a craft book and learning how to utilise old crafts in new ways to make saleable items. Some of my articles in GR over the past couple of years are as a result of these efforts. I also learned where to get the materials for next to nothing. (My Scottish ancestry stands me in good stead.)

I also continued cooking and writing about cooking – and even came second in the Dairy Farmers Top Cook Competition in the state, in the creative category last year.

As we rented a house with no garden to speak of, my other interest has been denied me (re my book, *Making Money From Your Garden*, reviewed in GR 80 and elsewhere). Not having our home-grown produce I went in search of it and found market stalls and a farm out of town, from where I could buy fresh fruit and vegetables at a fraction of super-market prices. It was the next best thing.

Almost New Guinea

However, in spite of Herman's successes and his good academic results, there have been few teaching jobs coming his way. There have been very few new teaching positions in his field, and many colleges are actually shedding

staff. (The economic rationalists call this 'downsizing' and it's supposed to be good for us.) The people in the New Guinea Education Department thought differently. They advertised for teachers in all major Australian and NZ papers and interviewed short-listed candidates in all capital cities. Eventually, Herman was offered a position as Lecturer in the Economics School of the Port Moresby Business College for a period of three years.

We prepared to leave Australia to take up this position, but there ensued several months of delays over which we had no control. Worse still, we were given no reasons for the delays and no definite date of departure, and the commencing date for the job also kept being deferred. Other information we sought was also hard to come by. Our meagre savings almost disappeared while we waited. We even took a deposit on our car, but fortunately attached conditions to its sale. The uncertainty of everything caused a great deal of stress and anxiety – so much so that Herman finally declined the offer.

Lap of the Gods

What next? Well we will be moving, as new tenants are coming into our present 'home'. We are supposed to be on

our way to New Guinea and so advised the real estate agent of our intention to vacate. They have signed up new tenants. However, we know that there are new opportunities elsewhere – and it's part of the fun looking for and finding them. We are being philosophical and logical – and of course, appearing calm and unruffled on the surface.

The move to New Guinea didn't eventuate and Pam and Herman have settled, for the time being, on Bribie Island.

COMMUNITY ORGANICS

After the successful introduction of organic food to kindergartens, schools and hospitals in Vienna, authorities are now providing organic food to senior citizens' homes. The project is run in conjunction with the largest organic farming association in Austria, ERNTE-Vereband. A three-year testing period in 20 senior citizens homes indicated that organic products have higher qualities, support health, have not resulted in higher costs and contribute to the viability of Austrian farming families. A wide range of products is now being delivered to the homes of about 10,000 people, and they are reportedly well received by the seniors.

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FODDER FORESTS



PLANTING

by Vince Conlan, Binya, NSW.

Aside from providing windbreaks, shade and stock shelter, returning nutrients to the soil, attracting rain, reducing salinity, providing wildlife habitats, wood, oils, medicines, flowers, fodder and food, trees are beautiful and good for the soul. Planting them, however, is a great way to spend a lot of time, effort and money so it is important to do it right.

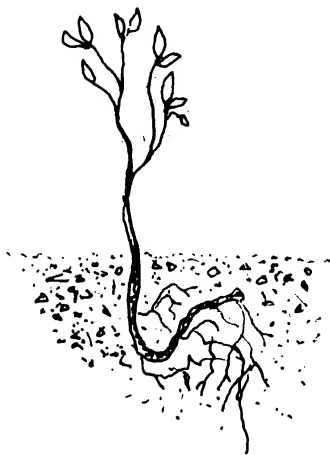
Remember, weed control is critical and use rip lines at least a year old. As an exception to the rule, last year I planted some orange wattle bare root seedlings. The seedlings were in transport for five days and had severely dried out. I placed them in sand beds and they were burnt by frost. Very few looked healthy when I planted them into fresh rip lines. Remarkably, a few survived.

PLANTING IN THE FIELD

Plant after the autumn break or succeeding rains. If you rarely have summer rain, like us, then forget planting anything after winter. If you receive below 500 mm rainfall per year and little or no summer rain, plant only in the autumn and winter. If you receive over 500 mm rainfall, you can generally plant in autumn, winter and spring. For areas with a lot of frost and more than 500 mm rainfall with some summer rain, spring may be the best time to plant.

Trees such as saltbush and tagasaste can be struck by cuttings. These can be buried deep into the soil, so that a third of the trunk may be below ground. Trees like eucalyptus and wattle do not strike from cuttings. Plant only the roots of trees that do not strike from cuttings. Burying the trunk to any extent can increase the chance of disease.

All trees should be planted upright. Do not lay the plants over. At the same time it is important not to cause J-root. If roots are bent too sharply (J-rooted), they can become knotted as they grow,



Avoid planting trees with bent roots.



Plant trees so stem and roots are straight.



Always plant trees so they are upright.

eventually killing the tree.

There are fancy hand-planters for putting in trees, but a shovel or spade will do the trick. Put fertiliser under the plant. Most Australian natives (like saltbush and wattle) thrive on normal NPK based fertilisers. Some (like grevilleas) don't. If in doubt, use soft fertilisers such as compost or manure, which will be longer lasting and more beneficial. Handle the plants gently and make sure they have good root/soil contact and are not J-rooted. The larger the clods, the less root contact. To prevent J-root, use a deeper, bigger hole. Press the soil down around the roots. Also water them in, as this forces air out of any pockets and reduces the shock.

For large scale plantings a tree planter is the best option. You may be able to borrow or get funding for one with your local landcare group.

Choosing Seedlings

J-rooting is an important consideration when buying potted seedlings as many nurseries use germination trays and transplant seedlings into larger pots before retailing them. Other things to consider are price, pot size and stem diameter. Choose well balanced seedlings with stout trunks.

For large scale plantings, bare root seedlings or direct seeding may be the cheapest option, especially if you grow your own. Bare root seedlings should be out of the ground for a minimum period. Direct seeding is cheap, but difficult. It is important to do germination trials prior to planting in order to determine sowing rates. It is also vital to have equipment that will create an optimum seed bed.

Guards and Mulch

Some people advocate using tree guards and mulching. Both can be beneficial. I try to plant trees suited to the environment and fence them off from stock, so have less need for tree guards. When mulching it is always important to leave

the stem of the tree clear to stop collar-rot and other infections. Mulching is an excellent way to conserve moisture and control weeds.

Mixed Communities

Trees seem to survive better in mixed communities, so whether you are planting an orchard, bushfood enterprise, fodder forest or timber, it is important to plant a range of species, some of which should be legumes. Wattle trees are legumes, they absorb nitrogen from the air and, with the help of little rhizomes, fix it into the soil. Nitrogen, of course, is an essential ingredient in all fertilisers but much of it is quickly lost. Nitrogen is longer lasting and more available to plants when it has been fixed into the soil by a legume.

ORANGE WATTLE

Orange wattle is a legume, one of the best fodder shrubs and a great bushfood.

Habitat

Orange wattle (*Acacia saligna*) is native to Western Australia, occurring naturally in a wide variety of situations from swampy sites and river banks to small rocky hills. It occurs on many soil types including poor calcareous sands and heavy clays. Orange wattle can be found in humid (750 - 1000 mm rainfall per year) or arid regions (as little as 200 mm rainfall per year). It is drought and frost tolerant. Young seedlings, however, are susceptible to frost, causing them to lose some of their leaves but little other damage.

Propagation

Orange wattle can be propagated from seed and by suckering. The seeds ripen mid summer and can be harvested easily by hand-stripping them into a plastic bin. Ripping around orange wattle roots causes the plant to send up suckers, which can be dug up and moved. It is,



Orange wattle (*Acacia saligna*) – a useful multi-purpose shrub.

however, much easier to just plant seed. All wattle seed has natural germination inhibitors. Strike rates can be improved dramatically by putting seeds in water just off the boil and leaving them to soak for two days.

Uses

Orange wattle is highly regarded as a fodder plant. Some claim its leaves can be 22 percent protein. High tannin levels, however, reduce the availability of this protein and the amount digested is probably much lower, but would vary according to timing, climate and soil type. Research by the Department of Agriculture and CSIRO shows that a sole diet of orange wattle will not fatten stock. Studies in Egypt and South Africa suggest the plant has a vital role in arid farming systems. Barki lambs on a diet of 50 percent of both lucerne and orange wattle, had higher levels of digestible nutrients than lambs on a sole diet of lucerne.

Orange wattle can be completely grazed off and will reshoot new leaves in spring. The shrub is often wider than it is tall and can produce up to five tonnes of biomass per acre per year. Overseas, it is grown for wood and in the past it was planted extensively for bark tannin production. In Australia it is planted as an ornamental and used for revegetation of mining areas. Like all deep-rooted legumes, orange wattle recycles nitrogen and many other nutrients leached into the subsoil. It also attracts wildlife, particularly birds.

Orange wattle has been harvested for thousands and thousands of years. The seed is delicious.

Note: Orange wattle has become a weed in some parts of South Africa. Please consult with Greening Australia or Landcare before planting it in humid regions.

Next issue: Middle Eastern carob and growing bare root seedlings in the garden. Until then: Viva the evolution!

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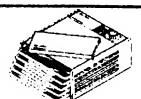
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ARE YOU COMPLIANT?

by Neville Jackson, Tingha, NSW.

Grass Roots readers will have a significant advantage over most of the population when it comes to coping with any problems (however minor or major they might be) arising as a result of something, at first sight, so absurdly trivial as a date anomaly in a computer chip. Self-sufficiency skills and resourcefulness are likely to see us through and allow us to assist others less well prepared. We might just grow a little extra, store a little extra, and check our backup systems where we are dependent on major services/utilities. What we won't do is panic or feel powerless. We hope you benefit from Neville Jackson's timely advice, while realising that many GR readers incorporate these suggestions into their lifestyles as a matter of course anyway.

I don't mean, 'are you really really friendly?' No, I'm referring to the year 2000 millennium bug problem (also known as Y2K, or year 2000). Some 'experts' state that it will be a nonevent, others that it will be the end of the world as we know it. I suspect it will be somewhere in between.

Much has been written in the last couple of years regarding the problems and huge costs of compliance faced by governments, utilities and business, but little if anything for the rest of us.

The nub of the situation boils down to this: that computers, other than Apple Macs, might not recognise the two last zeros of year 2000 and revert dates to 1900, or just crash and refuse to operate.

In that event, there are worries that electricity, water, sewerage, fuel, transport, food, banking and a range of other services could be thrown into chaos. For, as you know, computers are used in just about every business, and the inter-linked nature of computers means that problems in one sector can quickly spread to others.

I don't believe aeroplanes will fall from the sky, but I would not recommend flying at that time to avoid problems at home unless you can afford a holiday on a South Seas island with solar power. International airlines are tipped to offer cheaper fares at 'that time' to offset the expected reluctance of passengers. Surveys of Americans revealed that over 50 percent of potential passengers will not fly over the New Year period.

Some people are complacent. I heard a florist blithely say that it wouldn't affect her business. But what if the power is off? Not just lights, but cool room, air conditioner and coffee urn too? Another problem that could

affect every small or large business is that customers desert a problem area. Look what happened in Auckland! No power equals no people! And water. Could most people do without drinking water on tap for long? I doubt it. If fuel supplies are disrupted, then transport shipments are out too. Panic buying of foodstuffs would soon empty shelves! Of course that's as long as the cash lasts. Credit cards, EFTPOS or any other 'fake moneys' may not be usable. The florist didn't look too good after she considered those ideas. Still, nothing might go astray, but are you willing to put your lifestyle to the test? Anyway, here are a few of my thoughts on the matter.

ELECTRICITY

Power supply is possibly the most important utility to most people for it controls the functions of just about everything that modern society depends on. The power industry itself is not the whole problem however. Date-impressed chips have been installed in an amazing variety of household appliances because it was considered more economical to use a limited run of date-dependent chips. They were used in electrical items that

didn't need them. Would you believe, even in some toasters? So air conditioners, radios, TVs and perhaps your toaster, could go belly up!

Australia's only nuclear reactor at Lucas Heights is likely to be shut down before New Year's Eve because the NSW State Government cannot guarantee the millennium bug will not disrupt supply of power and water. These are essential for safe working conditions. For anyone who is curious regarding the compliance status of NSW utilities, the Internet Year 2000 Home page may help, but most information is restricted and available only to public servants with passwords.

Solutions

Solar panels supply 12 volt power for lights, radio and TV (is anything on?), but unless you install enough panels and pass through an inverter to 240 volts, you will be limited to small appliances such as the above. Better than nothing!

For a more substantial power supply a generator can be hired or bought. During Auckland's power disaster, generators were brought in from all over, including Australia. A customer told me that his roof had a hole in it, for that's where the hire fees went! A word of

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advice: book early!

For cooking, dust off the BBQ, buy some charcoal or fill the LP gas bottle. A gas light appliance is a good standby. LP gas supplies, like fuel, may be restricted in a crisis.

It is fortunate for Australia that the Y2K problems will occur in our summer. Just imagine the cold, misery and hardship in the Northern Hemisphere if the power or oil supply is disrupted.

WATER

As a much younger person, I lived in a country area where the water supply was regularly disrupted in long hot summers. A neighbour had a well that was kindly offered as a last resort, but after I opened the lid and found where Tiddles had disappeared to, I lost interest in that idea. So when the water gurgled into the sink at 11.30pm, I cleaned the bath and filled it. The tub was topped up whenever available. Nowadays there are fewer bathtubs around, showers are cheaper in cost and water usage.

Solutions

Explore your options. If you don't have your own rainwater tanks, what can you safely store drinking water in?

Bottled water comes in 10 litre plastic containers and larger plastic drums of 200 litres can be obtained new or second-hand – ones previously filled with bulk foodstuffs are best for they are made from food-grade plastic. Containers that held mayonnaise or crushed garlic will retain their odour (whew!). Most others will clean up without problems. If *Yellow Pages* directories don't help, try the local bakery or users of bulk foods, such as restaurants.

SEWERAGE

Big cities make big sewerage. If your friendly sewerage treatment works isn't Y2K compliant, it won't take long to back up and make flush toilets unusable. It won't help to go at work or the supermarket either, because they all use the same piping systems!

Solutions

Urban and country areas are better off in this instance, for a long or short drop toilet can usually be arranged. Many country dwellers also have their own septic systems.

Chemical toilets can be bought at supermarkets or camping goods stores.

Shop early for Christmas!

If your water supply is restricted, a bucket of water from the backyard pool will flush a toilet.

Next time I'll discuss money matters, food, fuels, vehicles and business strategies.

ST JOHN'S WORT AND SUN HARMFUL?

The Lancet states that St John's Wort, a popular over-the-counter herbal remedy for depression, may cause temporary nerve damage in people who use it and are then exposed to sunlight. Compounds known as 'photoactive hypericins' are among the active ingredients in St John's Wort. When exposed to light, these compounds produce substances that can damage cells. Myelin, the fatty insulation that wraps around nerves, is particularly vulnerable to this damage.

Reported in *Hippocrates Newsletter*.



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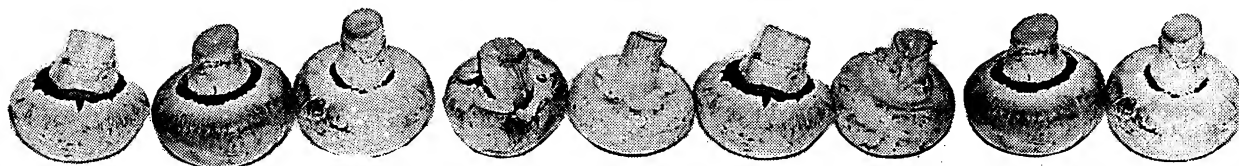
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MUSHROOM GROWING

by Dorothy Creevey, Old Bonalbo, NSW.



Most people love mushrooms, but they can be expensive to buy. I've developed a method that allows me to have my own fresh mushrooms for most of the year, and they're as close as the garden shed.

SPORE

The first stage in cultivating mushrooms is the germination of spores.

To obtain the mushroom spore:

- Trim edge of large flat mushrooms.
- Remove the stalks and lay bottom side down on a piece of white paper
- Invert a glass over.
- Leave until you can see the black spore on the paper.
- Boil some wheat or rye (to kill and sterilise it) and put it in a jar.
- Let the grain cool.
- Scrape the spore into the jar of grain.
- Put a hole in the lid and then plug the hole with cotton wool (or use an airlock).
- Leave at 21 - 27 degrees Celsius until the contents become white and furry (now known as spawn and later used for spawning).

GROWING

Grow during autumn, winter and spring in a shed or other draught-free shelter. During the three hotter months, they can only be grown in a cool place such as a tunnel or cellar, or in a specially built mushroom house.

Outside they can be grown in ridge beds, which are covered with at least 15 centimetres of loose straw and hessian for protection, avoiding growing during summer months. A good spot is also under pines or oaks.

COMPOST

The essential ingredient in successful mushroom growing is a suitable compost to support vigorous mycelial

growth. This compost is made from horse, cow, fowl or sheep manure with straw bedding included or added.

The preparation of the compost should be carried out under cover, protected from rain.

- Dry, fully matured grass may be used when straw is not available.
- Some wood shavings mixed into the manure are not detrimental, though a quantity of lime will have to be added to neutralise the acidity of the sawdust.
- The fresher the manure, the greater the heat it generates. 'Fresh,' means no more than a week old, with straight from the stable being preferable. If horse or cow manure is used, it must be not more than five weeks old. Fowl or sheep manure, if it has been kept dry, may be kept for a few months.
- To generate the heat necessary to ferment the manure, the heap must be made no smaller than one cubic metre. Smaller heaps will lose heat very quickly and the material will not decompose sufficiently.

Proportions of Manure to Straw

- horse manure 4:1
- cow manure 5:2
- fowl or sheep 3:2

When it is not possible to ascertain the quantities by weight, make two heaps. The heap of straw should be three times as big as the heap of manure.

Making Compost

- The manure should be shaken carefully and all lumps broken up.
- Mix the straw and manure together.
- Add water until all straw is thoroughly wet, but so that no moisture runs out from the heap.
- Shape the manure into a heap and leave to heat up.
- After 5 - 7 days turn the heap so that the original outside of the heap forms the centre of the new heap and vice versa.

• If compost is too dry, spray with water, adding as much as the compost will absorb.

• The heap will heat up again and the turning process has to be repeated four or five times, even six times, if fowl manure is being used. All the moisture necessary has to be added during the first three turns.

Compost is ready for assembling the beds when the straw is dark brown, a sample twisted and pulled in both hands easily 'shears off', the sample leaves the palm only slightly moist when squeezed in the hand (no moisture must run through the fingers), and all objectionable smell is gone.

Note: Undercomposted manure tends to overheat in the beds and leads to poor mycelial growth. On the other hand, overcomposting will remove many of the nutrients essential for production of a good crop.

BEDS

Preparation

Once the compost has reached the correct stage of fermentation, the beds themselves can be prepared.

In Boxes: pack the compost firmly to a depth of at least 15 centimetres.

In Flat Beds: pack compost firmly to a depth of 15 - 20 centimetres. Sides and



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ends should have retaining planks to prevent drying out.

In Ridge Beds: the compost is packed into a firm triangular ridge, 75 centimetres wide at the base and 75 centimetres high.

After filling the beds, let them sit for 7 - 10 days to ferment further.

Spawning

After the temperature in the beds has dropped to 30 degrees C, approximately 3-4 days, it is spawned.

- Remove the pure white grain spawn from the glass jar, breaking it into small pieces.

- Plant one level teaspoon to each hole, 10 - 25 centimetres apart and 2.5 - 3.5 centimetres in depth.

- Press the compost firmly back in place to ensure good contact with the spawn.

- Cover the bed with papers weighed down by a few small stones.

- Leave for 15 - 30 days for the spawn to grow.

Casing

This layer of soil changes the growing conditions and stimulates fruiting.

- Remove the papers from the bed.
- Moisten the bed if necessary.

- Cover the top of the bed with a layer of *moist* soil, 2.5 - 3.5 centimetres thick. This soil must not be tamped but left in a rough state. It should be a loose textured loam (neither too sandy nor clayey) that has been dug from at least 30 centimetres below surface soil, stacked into a heap and mixed with a

little agriculture lime. It should be mixed before preparing the compost for the beds and should remain stacked until required for use. Peat moss may be used 2.5 - 3.5 centimetres thick. A little agriculture lime should be added to the damp peat.

Bed Management

Mushrooms grow best in a damp atmosphere, therefore spraying walls and floor with a fine spray of water will be beneficial. Very little water is required on the beds after spawning or casing until the mushrooms begin to appear.

The first mushrooms will appear approximately six weeks from planting, depending on temperature. It is very important to keep the surface soil moist. *However, under no circumstances must the water seep throughout the soil and reach the compost.*

When cropping commences the beds are watered with a very fine, indirect spray once a day, until the casing soil is uniformly moist throughout. Remember, it is better to underwater than to spoil the bed with overwatering!

After this, one or two sprinkles a week will be sufficient, depending on the condition of the beds. If they do dry out quickly, water more often. Do not forget ventilation. Avoid draughts, but allow plenty of fresh, moist air.

PICKING

It will take 5 - 10 days, depending on the temperature, for the mushroom to develop from pinhead to 'flat' stage.

WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?

Mycelium: The mass of branching filaments by which a fungus spreads throughout the nutrient medium, in this case compost. The fungal equivalent of roots.

Spore: The reproductive body of the mushroom, visible as fine dark, almost powdery, specks and produced by mature mushrooms. The fungal equivalent of seed.

Spawn: The product of the interaction of mushroom spores and grain from which reproduction of mushrooms occurs.

Pick at the stage you prefer, more flavour will be found in open flat mushrooms with gills dark brown in colour. Do not cut the mushrooms but twist the complete stalk out. Fill the holes with fresh casing soil enriched with plenty of lime. The bed will continue to crop for 12 - 15 weeks (with fewer and inferior mushrooms) and yield 500 grams to 1.5 kilograms of mushrooms per 900 square centimetres. After that, the bed is depleted and has to be disposed of. Spent compost is very good garden fertiliser. New compost and spawn are required for a new bed.

Caution: Weed fungi can invade the beds so care must be taken that you are picking nonpoisonous ones.

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PAPYRUS AND CHUFA

TWO SEDGES WITH MANY USES

by Nick Romanowski, Colac, Vic.

Sedges are the aquatic and water's edge equivalent of grasses, to which they are closely related. Although not as well known to most gardeners this family includes many useful species. Chinese water chestnuts are already widely available, but another group called leafrushes (*Cyperus* spp) includes some of the best and potentially most productive plants for dams and boggy places.

PAPYRUS

Papyrus (*C. papyrus*) is the most familiar species, a giant, tropical species which will also thrive in warm temperate and subtropical areas where it doesn't have to put up with frosts or long periods of cold. This ornamental sedge is widely sold through nurseries, and was the source of one of the earliest types of paper (the word paper was derived from this plant's name). The stems are still used to make papyrus, a high-quality, rather silky paper which is enjoying a revival of interest in recent years and is a delight to work with – although some paints and inks bleed along the tissues.

In rich tropical swamps papyrus can grow up to five metres high. The leaves and stems grow at an incredible rate under ideal conditions, producing over 60 tonnes of dry matter per hectare each year (wet weight would be closer to 600 tonnes!), and are being investigated for potential as stock fodder or fuel. The young shoots have highest food value for stock, while older stems are best used as fuel. The creeping underground stems are edible when cooked, although not of exceptional quality, and have also been chewed raw.

Papyrus has also been used as thatching and to make rope, baskets, mats, canvas for floor coverings, sails, and even boats. Although reasonably seaworthy if the stems are harvested at the right stage in its growth cycle, it is doubtful that the ancient Egyptians were so foolhardy as to take such boats too far from land. In recent years the flowerheads are increasingly being used as a cut flower, and, if you are

troubled by crocodiles, you will be pleased to know that papyrus is reputed to repel them. It is easily divided, or can be grown from seed sown on waterlogged soil in spring.

CHUFA

Chufa or earth almond (*C. esculentus* var *sativus*) is a selected clone of an otherwise weedy species, also possibly first cultivated in ancient Egypt, later in ancient Greece, and perhaps in Assyria. The wild forms of this plant are serious potential weeds and illegal to grow in most parts of the world, but chufa is a delicious and highly selected clone which very rarely flowers, so it can only be propagated from tubers.

Chufa has been cultivated in southern Europe for centuries at least, and is known from Egypt from at least 3500 years ago – perhaps as much as 6000 years.

The tubers are larger than in most wild forms of the species, up to three centimetres by two centimetres with a much higher oil content (around 25 percent compared to usually less than 15 percent), higher sugar content (around 17.5 percent compared to 9 percent to 14 percent), and smoother flesh which is appreciably more pleasant to eat than that of fibrous wild types. The tubers cluster around the base of the plant instead of spreading more widely, making harvest easy.

The nutty flavoured tubers are often compared to hazelnut or almond, though they are distinctly

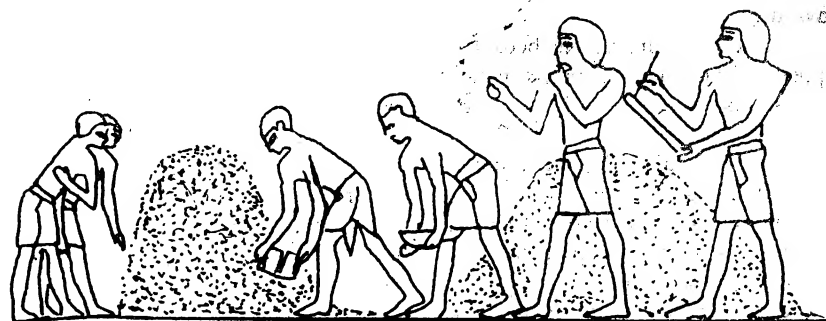
sweeter, and can be eaten raw or cooked in various ways. They have been used in various desserts including puddings, cakes, ice cream and sherbets, or even as a dessert in their own right. Roasted tubers have been used as a coffee substitute. Raw ones can be pressed to produce a sweet, high-quality dressing oil also used to lubricate delicate apparatus, and the residue is a nutritious stock feed. Their flavour is most agreeable once they have been dried and they may be soaked before use if required.

Chufa is multiplied by planting tubers a few centimetres deep in moist to wet (not waterlogged), open soils in early to mid spring, allowing a warm four to five month growing period. Plants form a small, dense-growing tussock around 20 to 30 centimetres high, but up to 90 centimetres sometimes, depending on climate and other conditions. This is a very productive clone – each plant can be expected to produce around a hundred new tubers under ideal conditions.

There are also several less well known *Cyperus* species with edible tubers. Sweet or English galingale (*C. longus*) is a European tuber-bearing species that was reputedly much used as a flavouring in medieval England, although I have found little mention of it in most cookbooks dealing with that period. It seems a bit weedy and shouldn't be grown here as it could easily join the ever increasing list of introduced weeds.

Australian Species

The tubers of at least three Australian



Weighing the chufa crop and recording it on papyrus. Wall painting from Thebes, 15th Century BC.

species were also harvested by Aboriginal peoples – these are nalgoo (*C. bulbosus*), Downs nutgrass (*C. bifax*), and yelka (*C. victoriensis*). These tubers are rarely above one centimetre in diameter and have a pleasant, starchy but not particularly sweet flavour comparable to that of chufa, and were eaten raw or roasted. All three species are floodplain plants, growing around rivers particularly in drier inland areas where they may be flooded for long periods or dry out completely at other times.

Nick Romanowski is the author of many books and articles on aquaculture, waterplants and water animals, including an aquaculture series in *Grass Roots*. His nursery Dragonfly Aquatics offers the largest range of water and wetland plants in the Southern Hemisphere, and will be releasing chufa for the first time in Australia in spring 1999. Send three 45¢ stamps for a current mail order catalogue to: RMB AB 366, Colac, 3249.



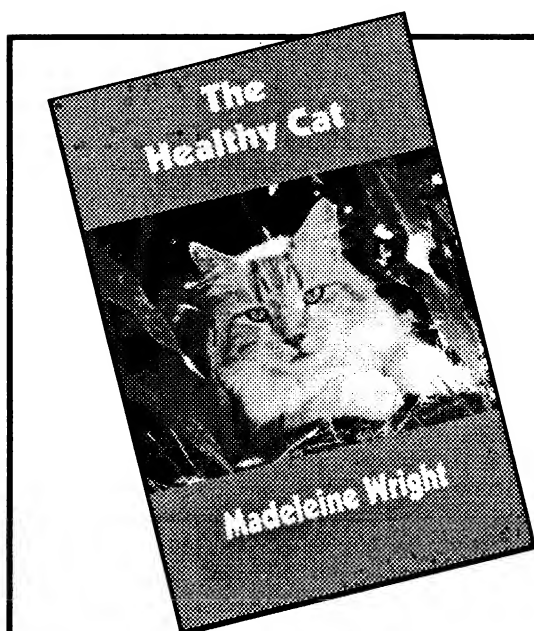
Chufa plant, after Dodonaeus, 1608.

CHILLI WINE

50 small chillies
1 tbsp cloves
1/2 kg white sugar
1/2 kg honey
1/2 gallon water
1 dsp tartaric acid
26 ml lemon essence

Cut up the chillies and add them, cloves, sugar and honey to the water. Boil for at least one hour (the longer it boils the stronger it becomes). Strain the mixture and add the lemon essence. Allow to cool. Bottle and use immediately if required. Use: Immediately the onset of a cold is feared or a sore throat or flu symptoms appear. Place one dessertspoon in the mouth and hold there for as long as possible allowing the liquid to percolate around the mouth and tonsils and passages. Then swallow the mixture. Settles the stomach as well.

L Perkins



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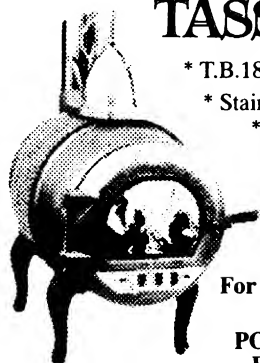
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ROUND THE MARKET PLACE

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THE BIG WHEELER – STANLEY HANDCARTS

Originally from the USA, these big carts are an alternative to commercial and home wheelbarrows. They have a much greater load capacity (180 kg) than wheelbarrows but can still be easily manoeuvred because of the specially engineered components. Features of this balanced engineering include the welded steel angle iron across the bottom of the cart and the spoked wheels with wide hubs and steel ball bearings to make going up and down steps easy. Big Wheeler handcarts have a removable front door panel for emptying goods, panels made of 12 mm all-weather stained high grade plywood and a large zinc-coated steel handle. The carts have many uses around the home and garden and for farming, market gardening, building, factories etc. There are two models: the Suburban is narrower and so can fit through garden gates etc, and the Estate is wider – a bit over one metre – and can actually carry five bales of hay. The Estate model is designed more for stables, nurseries, farms etc. The retail cost of the Suburban model is \$340 and the Estate is \$409. Both carts are unconditionally guaranteed and all parts are replaceable if damaged.

Contact: Patrick Fletcher, Stanley Handcarts, 1/45 White St, Kilmore 3764. Ph/fax: 03-5781-1779.



HELPFUL NEW INVENTION FOR FARMERS

The Pelican Tank is a low-cost water container for water transportation in rural areas, useful for drought relief, fire fighting, tree planting, watering and spraying. Inventor Allan Weatherall first came up with the idea after he ran out of water at his own home. Dependence on tank water, and the sometimes unavailability of traditional water carriers, encouraged Allan to look for an alternative and effective way of transporting water. Time in East Africa also confirmed the potential his invention has in countries where access to clean drinking water is a problem. The Pelican Tank is made from Australian food-grade Tfab (patented) polyethylene material which ensures durability and high UV resistance. It fits into a ute or a 6' x 4' trailer and can contain up to 650 litres (approximately 143 gallons) of drinkable water. It also comes in a smaller 325 litre size. When not in use it folds up to store away. The large tank costs \$170 and the smaller tank \$110, including postage. Allan has also developed a rainwater catchment system for catching rainwater in remote locations where roof catchment is unavailable.

For further information contact your local farming supplies store or direct to: Allan Weatherall, Alternative Concepts, PO Box 700, Belgrave. 3160. Ph: 03-9754-4744

THE KEEPER

It has been estimated that a woman is likely to use 15,000 tampons or sanitary napkins in a lifetime. Here is an environmentally and financially friendly alternative to this situation. Although it has been used in Europe and the USA for over forty years, the Keeper has only recently become available in Australia. It is a natural gum rubber cup that is worn internally to collect the monthly fluid and can be worn for up to eight hours at a time. The Keeper comes in two styles, depending on whether an individual has had a natural childbirth or not. The cost is \$58 and comes with a three month money-back guarantee.

Contact: Josette van Kalmthout, The Keeper, PO Box 74, Batemans Bay 2536. Fax: 02-4472-4045.

FIFTH ELEMENT FERTIGATION SYSTEM

The Fertigation system pumps liquid manure, which is made on site, through your irrigation system. Raw material, such as poultry manure, is loaded into a container and lowered into a tank filled with water. It then goes through a process that extracts most nutrients from the manure. This results in a liquid fertiliser to pump through your irrigation system, and solid remains which are used for mulch or potting mix. Unlike conventional fertilisers that take time to become assimilated by plants, the 5E system provides nutrients that are immediately available for plant uptake. Trials conducted on banana crops and button squash have had impressive results. Not only did production increase remarkably, but bunch weight, shelf life, flavour and colour also improved. Fifth Element Fertigation system allows you to cut out the middleman by making potent liquid manure fertiliser on site and available for immediate use. The system comes in various sizes – for the home garden, the hobby farm or nursery, and commercial operations – and range in price from \$1800 to \$18,000.

For further information contact: Garry Nunn, 5th Element Fertigation System, Ph: 07-5483-9468. Fax: 07-5483-9467.

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Contact: Herbon Natural Products, 10 Concord Cres Carrum Downs 3201. Ph: 03-9775-0224.

Recent Releases

On this page we present information about newly published books that we feel will interest readers, with details of prices and publishers. We no longer distribute books for other publishers so if you're interested in buying any of the books described here, please order them through your nearest bookstore.

★ FEATURE TITLE ★

FOOD PRESERVING AT HOME

John Gross.

It can be tricky working out correct times and methods to preserve foods as these things vary with different kinds of food. Cost and preferred end product will also influence decision-making. This book has a chapter on each of the preserving methods – canning; pickled products; jellies, jams, preserves etc; fruit juices; freezing; drying; curing & smoking. And it includes recipes,

detailed instructions, temperatures etc where relevant. A comprehensive manual to take the guesswork out of keeping food safely while retaining colour, flavour, texture and nutrients.

H/b, 182pp, Choicebooks, Australian Consumers' Association, 57 Carrington Rd, Marrickville 2204. RRP \$27.



UPHOLSTERY Basics & Repairs Ron Pultar

This little book is from the Better Homes and Gardens mini workbook series. It is full of instructions and diagrams which really make upholstery look easy. It covers the main techniques and equipment involved and then has step-by-step projects you can follow for covering popular pieces of furniture such as an ottoman, a traditional dining chair and a wingback chair.

**P/b, 64pp, Murdoch Books, 45 Jones Street, Ultimo, 2007.
RRP \$3.95.**

HYDRANGEAS Glyn Church

The photos in this book, beautifully presenting the blues, pinks, reds and whites of lush hydrangeas, make you want to rush out and plant some, or at least start looking after the ones you've got. This comprehensive book tells you everything about how to do that. It looks at the many species and cultivars and requirements and maintenance for healthy hydrangeas. Also available from A Gardener's Guide series, is *Hibiscus* by Jacqueline Walker. This book has a similar format, accompanied by photos of the yellows, oranges, reds of hibiscus flowers.

H/b, 96pp, Lothian, 11 Munro Street, Port Melbourne 3207. Ph: 03-9645-1544. RRP \$29.95.

AGRICULTURE AND THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPERATIVE Jim Pratley & Alistar Robertson (editors).

Australia has a poor natural endowment for agriculture – dry with rather infertile and fragile soils – but through continuous innovation, technical skills and determination, Australian agriculture has often led the world in productivity. However, we now know that this has come at considerable expense – serious land degradation, loss of water quality, declining biodiversity and other unresolved problems. This scientific compilation contains up-to-date accounts of the issues involved.

**P/b, 224 pp, CSIRO Publishing, PO Box 1139, Collingwood, 3066.
Ph: 03-9662-7666. RRP \$49.95 plus \$8 p&p.**

THE BAMBOO HANDBOOK A Farmer's, Grower's & Product Developer's Guide Durnford L Dart

This book is based on the knowledge and hands-on experiences of an Australian commercial bamboo grower with many years experience. It is a practical and detailed guide for growers and prospective growers covering horticultural and financial information. Readers are shown how to establish themselves in the potentially highly profitable bamboo products and businesses. Chapters cover the reasons for growing bamboo, frequently asked questions, knowing your climate, selection by genus and species, when to plant, how to plant, crop maintenance and bamboo harvesting. Photos and charts clarify the text.

P/b, 120pp, Bamboo Australia, 1171 Kenilworth Rd, Belli Park 4562. Fax: 07-5447-0299. \$39.50 plus \$3.50 p&p.

THE BREAST CANCER PREVENTION DIET Dr Bob Arnot

Modern day cancer is seen by some as a maladjusted response to the lack of health-sustaining agents in present day diets. A range of research has confirmed that what women eat can dramatically impact on whether or not they contract breast cancer. The author has combined this information to inform women just how they can use diet to prevent the onset or recurrence of the disease. The same foods have also been shown to help prevent other forms of cancer, heart disease, stroke etc. Although it includes some meal plans, the bulk of the book describes the vital nutritional components and how they work.

P/b, 262pp, Hodder Headline, Level 22, 201 Kent Street, Sydney 2000. Ph: 02-8248-0800. RRP \$19.95.

BULLY BUSTING How to help children deal with teasing and bullying Evelyn M Field

Here is practical help for children suffering from bullying. Evelyn Field is a psychologist who has many years experience counselling bullied children and was bullied herself while growing up and profoundly affected by it. The first part of the book deals with understanding bullying and then part two focuses on activity-based skills building which is basically a six-step program to help victims of bullying to give them the skills to cope. The book is designed for parents to use with children of primary and secondary age.

P/b, 272pp, Finch Publishing, PO Box 120, Lane Cove 1595. Ph: 02-9550-9207. RRP \$19.95.



DOWN HOME ON THE FARM

by Megg Miller

Outside the garden gate is a pile of blue metal screenings, a reproachful reminder that I haven't tackled the problem of the old house tank. This tank has been surviving on little more than hope for months now. Each morning as I greet the day and tackle feeding poultry, I find this heap home to a number of waiting birds. An extended family of geese may be standing side by side, on other occasions turkeys will be proudly parading. Should these vacate the 'mountain', chooks hastily take possession. Even the dog likes this elevation and can often be found sound asleep on its sloping sides. Shouting entreaties to the birds to get off is useless, my feathered friends clearly love viewing their domain from this lofty rise.

The recent addition of a second mound, this time of sand, has increased their opportunity for climbing high. When I ordered the sand for the base of my new super-duper 3000 gallon tank two months ago, I thought I had the amount right, but delivery exceeded needs, resulting in a convenient heap left over awaiting a future project. The birds like this elevation just as much as the blue metal stack, in fact it probably has more appeal. They pick up fine grit and scratch in it, dispersing sand everywhere as they scabble down the sides. I can tell you it's a funny sight seeing a bunch of geese all crowded close together like school kids vying over who is the king of the castle.

The arrival of the new tank had been imminent as I penned this column last issue. In fact, I rushed from dropping off the finished paste-up at the printers to home, hoping to coincide with the delivery of half a load of sand. The driver was a tad early and had dumped the load where he thought the tank should be sited. It wasn't to plan, but upon seeing the amount of sand in the load, I realised I'd be pushed to prepare the base in the time available, let alone move the heap across the yard to some preferred spot. The tank firm had advised as to the required width and depth of the base and so I shovelled, swore and sweated until it was right. Red faced and

exhausted, I tottered inside and collapsed on the bed, relieved the hard work was over. Five minutes later the truck arrived. I'm too weak to get up I thought, long forgotten muscles already starting to protest. 'Are you there?', bellowed the driver, 'I need a bit of a hand.' Indeed he did. Together we pulled and pushed the tank off the back of the truck amidst a tangle of ropes that purportedly made the job easier. At last it was in place. I'm not sure what this fellow would have done if I hadn't been sound of limb and willing to work – hailed a passing vehicle and kidnapped the driver? I could detect a little gleam of respect in his eyes as we shook hands and went our ways. Was I a grump the next day, although remarkably, neither stiff nor sore.

The geese have detected the promise of an early spring. The ganders are enjoying a surge of testosterone and there is much shrieking and beating of wings. Such posturing is rather premature. The way our weather has been it could be months before spring arrives – we haven't had a

proper winter yet. The nights are bitter, but many of our days are still blue-skied and sunny. For a while there was a rush of broody turkeys, but it was too early for the males to be fertile so the sitting on eggs was in vain. I've had to lock up broody chooks so they couldn't steal a nest and produce early chicks. One Game hen actually did manage to evade detection and produced one miserable chick that displayed the naked neck characteristics. The poor little blighter didn't stand a chance – he cheeped around behind mum for a week or two but succumbed to the cold because of his reduced feathering. Half bald or fully feathered, it's still too early for chicks. It is nice to be getting eggs again and Lucy my Italian friend who gets lots for pasta making was relieved to see the increased numbers of full cartons. 'I have to make a big sponge for a family 21st and your eggs are always better than the shop ones.' The changeability of the weather is not conducive to good egg laying and it is remarkable how the numbers go up and down depending on whether we have had a



'I'm the king of the castle.' All the farm stock vie for the high vantage point on the mountain of screenings.

few sunny days or a grey wet spell.

The geese express their reactions to change overtly, probably because they act as a coherent flock. A simple example occurred some weeks back. I'd had a day or so away and drove in Sunday evening expecting to find geese sitting all around the drive and near the garden gate. Not a bird was in site – most puzzling. They had been left free to wander the property because the logistics of lock-up were too difficult, though I'd arranged for the birds to be fed and checked each day. The dog would be on duty, a necessity as foxes were active in the district. So where were the geese, and why weren't they taking advantage of my absence to poop and mess up the place? I found the flock skulking behind the old office where they're normally locked up at night. They had put themselves in voluntarily. Only the presence of a fox close by or a frightening incident would unite them so closely and keep them there together when the gates were wide open.

This may not strike anyone as a particularly momentous incident, but if you could see the antics this same group go through of a night when I try and herd them through the gate to be locked up you too would be stunned. They are easily spooked in the dark and run in all directions and then assort into some hierarchical order so that Micky won't ever precede Cecil, Milly and Molly always go through the gate together, Val inevitably tries to jump the queue and gets punished by Fred, who hates Nev and so on. Shrieks, feathers and flapping wings abound. That's a good night. Full moon is particularly tedious. Pushing the geese up and out of the paddock takes ages because of the eerie light. The last full moon threw weird shadows all around the open gate, confusing the geese so that most of them crashed into it. Panic spread and behaviour became even more frantic. Just as I had the bulk of the flock through, a turkey tom perching on a nearby branch stood up and flapped his wings. Bingo – geese clamoring in all directions. I was tempted to smack him round the ankles with a stick, but humor struggled to the fore at the absurdity of us all leaping and shrieking as though possessed.

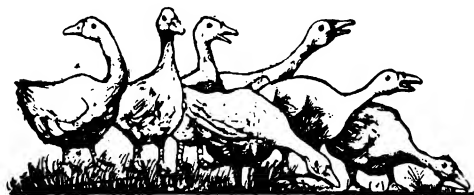
The geese have long been my

excuse for being late. I get to Lions meetings late because they won't go into their holding yard at night, then I'm late for work because they're reluctant to return to their paddock in the morning. The problem is they don't want to be rushed, and I can hear the clock ticking by. As the days lengthen and breeding time gets closer, they're going to get more and more uncooperative. I should have sold the extra stock off, I know. I'll have to take time off and get down to it or they will be nesting. Goodness, I'd really be in trouble then.

A moratorium has been reached with the possums. Not that it's obvious. Josie, one of my young friends, stayed over last night and was privy to a late night battle. 'Did you hear all the noise last night – how many possums were there?' The grunting and tumbling around was noisy on the corrugated iron roof and you could be forgiven for assuming there were dozens. It was probably only two old males. One kind reader, aware of my plight with these beasties, sent in a press cutting about mutated super rats, but unfortunately it says the researchers were also interested in super specimens of brushtails. Another reader has offered to take the pain of my existence, the possum that opens the door and swaggers through the house, if I can catch him. Soon, dear reader, soon, and thank you for the bracing talk.

Winter is mail order time for me, so I've been poring over the bulb and seed catalogues. And don't the descriptions of all the colourful varieties sound fabulous? Purple asparagus, sweet chocolate capsicum, black tomatoes and beetroot comprised of alternating pink and white rings. Gone are the plain old varieties of yesterday but let's hope the boutique vegies taste as good as they look. I don't have the water or the room to put in many new varieties, but it doesn't cost to scheme and dream. When Suni rang yesterday to say hello, I complained about not being able to sleep. 'I kept imagining all those gorgeous flowers and vegies and then it was so interesting I couldn't go to sleep'. 'Maybe you should think about something awful like thinning out the garlic, that's sure to make you want to sleep,' this forthright daughter replied.

Perhaps she's right. Counting sheep never worked, all the different breeds worldwide kept popping into my mind. How many different varieties of garlic are there? Not many I hope!



PENPALS

Hi, my name is Jenna, I am 10 years old. I like horses, swimming, netball, reading books and listening to music. I will write back to all my penpals.

Jenna

C/- GR, PO Box 117, SEYMOUR 3661.

My name is Crystal, I'm 15. I like music, art, poetry, goblins and leprechauns.

Crystal

C/- GR, PO Box 117, SEYMOUR 3661.

Hello, my name is Finella. I am six. I am in year 2. I like animals, reading, riding my bike, helping mum cook, swimming in the river, music and dancing. I would like a female penpal aged 6 - 7. I live at Crystal Waters Permaculture Village.

Finella

C/- GR, PO Box 117, SEYMOUR 3661.

My name is Michelle. I am ten years old. I would like a penpal around the age of 9 - 12. I would prefer a girl. My interests are horse riding, climbing trees, looking after the animals at my house, writing letters, listening to music, drawing, reading, playing with my friends and school. I love animals. My favourite animal is a horse. I will answer all letters.

Michelle

C/- GR, PO Box 117, SEYMOUR 3661.

I am 10 years old, I love reading, riding horses and watching movies. I go to a Steiner school and would love penpals of my own age.

Gissele

C/- GR, PO Box 117, SEYMOUR 3661.

Hello, my name is Ken and I am 34 years old, my interests are computers, the Internet, music, reading, the outdoors and I would like to try out the alternative lifestyle way of living, within a community. I would like to either email or snail mail females between 25 and 34 years for friendship and who would like to try out the alternative lifestyle as well.

Kenneth

C/- GR, PO Box 117, SEYMOUR 3661.

HOW TO ADVERTISE

Use the form provided below, or a separate sheet of paper, to print your advertisement clearly, **not in block capitals**, including correct punctuation. If you have more than one ad please print each one on a separate page. Remember to include an address or phone number in your advertisement. Count the number of words and multiply by 80 cents per word (phone number counted as one word) to work out the total cost of your advertisement. Send **with payment** to Grass Roots, PO Box 117, Seymour 3661, before the deadline and we'll include your advertisement in the next issue of Grass Roots. **Deadline for GR 135 is 30th August, 1999.** Please do not fax ads.

Sender's Name	For issues no/s
Address	Classification
.....	Postcode
.....	Cost
Cost for advertisements is 80c per word	

PROPERTY FOR SALE

NEW SOUTH WALES

STUART TOWN, CENTRAL WEST NSW, 1/2 hr from Orange. Sturdy 3 b/r fibro, 2 ac f/hold among hundreds ac common land, 1 1/2 km from town. Hugh shed, bore, power, ph, solar heating, 10,000 gal concrete tank. Beautiful setting, ideal retreat. \$79,000, all offers considered. Ph: 02-9559-2214.

FAR SOUTH COAST, 1/2 hr to beach, 1 1/2 hrs to snow fields, 3 b/r home, estab gardens, f/trees, hothouse, lge vegie garden. Commercial lavender plot. Set in 148 ac of forest with spectacular mountain views, lots more features. Price \$220,000. Ph: 02-6458-2066.

MID NORTH COAST NSW – Rollands Plains, 3 b/r Hardiplank home on 2 ac. Polished timber floors, cathedral ceilings, Aga s/c stove, solar powered. \$97,500. Ph: 02-6585-8028.

BULADELAH 25 ac, sloping block, 3 ac cleared to build, NE aspect, fully fenced, power & ph, tranquil rural outlook. \$49,000. Ph: 02-4977-3395.

COFFS HINTERLAND, 1/3 share, 'moringstar' 422 ac community, beautiful nth facing 5 ac personal share. Temporary dwelling, solar, ph, dam, prepared home site, inground cellar, materials. Ideal permaculture, festivals. School bus, Grafton/Coffs 40 mins, beaches 30, Glenreagh 10 km. \$55,000. Ph: 02-6649-2288.

MID NORTH COAST, 45 mins west of Kempsey, 100 ac fenced, mostly grazing country. Power, water, ph in comfortable dwelling. Permanent crk frontage, 5000 gal water tank. Spectacular mountain views. \$82,000. Ph: 02-4971-2193.

LIFESTYLE: MOGO, SOUTH COAST: imagine working in peace & tranquillity, on an island in the bush, no neighbours or traffic. Property, 1 ac set in the state forest, 2 mins to arts & craft village, Mogo, 10 mins to Batemans Bay. This fertile ac comes with spacious well designed self-suff home, studio & estab gardens. The studio houses a well estab picture framing business, ideal for an active retiree or just someone who wants to work in a stress-free environment. This lifestyle is offered for sale. \$310,000 WIWO. Ph: owner, 02-4474-4720.

CHEAP BUSH PROPERTY, nth coast NSW, 100 ac. Natural tea tree stands & a meandering perm crk frontage. Potential house sites; income; lifestyle. Real privacy in easy reach of major regional centres, 1 hr sth of Byron Bay with nat pks & beaches nearby. On school bus route. \$78,000 ONO. Ph: 02-6661-9178.

NAMBUCCA VALLEY FARM with self-contained cottage, 327 ac, own private valley, nth aspect, r/forest, red cedars, spring water, own crk, mountains & crk flats. Established deer/cattle facilities, organic last 25 years. Established fruit, nut trees, good fencing, huge concrete floor workshop + 2 garages, barn, handling shed/yards. Renovated 3 b/r house, polished timber floors, verandahs. \$320,000. Ph: 02-9337-5576.

NYMBOIDA, 35 mins to Grafton, 2 b/r mud brick house on 75 ac, mostly bush. Orchard, vegie garden, sheds, dam, pump, etc, etc. \$130,000 ONO. Must sell. Ph: Broni, 02-6649-4274.

WEST WYALONG AREA 36 kms, 5 ac, new 25 x 30 shed, concrete floor. Tank water, elec connected, ideal temporary accom, school bus, \$140 rates. Isolated peaceful living. No time wasters. No offers. \$40,000. Ph: 07-4092-7386.

THORA VALLEY VIA BELLINGEN, share on multiple occupancy property. Close to Steiner & state schools, & community centre. One b/r home with great potential. Biodynamic gardening under way. Native plantings surround house. \$100,000. Ph: 02-6655-8717.

BELLBROOK, 3 b/r homestead, mod cons, surrounded by rolling hills & r/forest. \$89,000. Ph: 02-6567-2080.

MOONAN FLAT, NSW, near Scone, 1 1/2 ac in sml village. Shed, fenced, power, \$15,000. Ph: 03-9704-0197.

UPPER HUNTER VALLEY, 650 ac, perfect self-suff, multiple occupancy, 5 b/r homestead, pool, 5 motel units, 2 dormitories, perm spring & crk. \$298,000. Ph: 018-643-996.

MID NORTH COAST, 19 km to town of Bowraville, 119 ac bush block, perm crk, natural springs, sml pocket of r/forest, several home sites, power & ph avail. \$63,000. Ph: 02-6568-8214.

MID NORTH COAST, near-new brick veneer house on 100 ac in bush retreat 1/2 hr west of Kempsey. Also has on-site c/van, 5 x 2.5m shed, garden shed, undercover parking, 14,000 gal r/water. Ph & elec connected, tractor & slasher incl. \$140,000 ONO. Ph: 02-6561-7386.

LAND TWENTY MINUTES FROM WINSOR NSW, 40 acres with running water & lge trees. North facing building site. Some flat land. Surrounded by state forest. \$80,000. Ph: owner, 02-4575-5242.

COOLAH AREA, 2 log cabins, one in need of repair, on 218 ac, yards, shearing shed, abundant iron bark timber, 4 paddocks, 4 dams, very private, school bus, tar road. \$110,000 ONO. Ph: 02-6375-0250 or 02-6375-0208.

PROPERTY FOR SALE

MID NORTH COAST between Forster & Gloucester, 5 ac almost level, flood free, cleared, fully fenced with power & ph. Suit permaculture, livestock & crops. Great position, peaceful views. Build your dream home & create the lifestyle you have been waiting for. Price \$58,000. ONO. For details ph owner, 02-6553-0037.

BEAUTIFUL NYMBOIDA, lovely spot with river access, Good land, good road, close to school & village. Mud brick house – lots of space & light; solar HWS; town water; power; big garden; in-ground pool; lots of sheds; 16 ac internally fenced; huge trees & bush replanting. \$170,000. Ph: 02-6649-4109 evenings please.

WOLLONGONG, 3 b/r, renovated, timber W/B, new kitchen, Colorbond roof, 2nd toilet. Close to uni, tech, pre, primary & high schools, bus, rail, F6 to Sydney. Beach, lake 15 mins. Access to grazing, running two milking goats, sheep, 25 mixed poultry, veg garden. Unique area, Cringila Village, a caring cultural community. Rear views of lge parkland & horse agistment paddocks. \$100,000 ONO. Ph: 04-1264-4485 after 6pm for inspection.

SECLUDED, PRIVATE, yet only 3 hrs to Syd, ½ hr Lithgow and Bathurst. Share in MO property of 560 ac, ½ bush, ½ paddocks with fences, dams, bores, roads. 5000m² home site has cottage with gas fridge, hot water, stove, ph, wood-heater & stove, tanks, beautiful garden – roses, perennials, vegies; views; school bus at gate. \$100,000. Ph: 02-6352-2083.

NYMBOIDA, ON ORGANIC ACRES, beautiful modern solar designed western red cedar home. Good workshop/studio lge productive orchard, fertile soils, perm crk, open pasture & r/forest valleys, close to nat pk & river. \$158,000. Ph: 02-6649-4209.

QUEENSLAND

FOR SALE OR EXCHANGE, down south preference. Five ac hardwood timber plantation, over 300 20 yr old trees in SE Qld, 2 hrs Brisbane, 30 mins Gympie, Tin Can Bay (gateway to Fraser Island), 1 hr to Hervey Bay. Two dams at top end of sloping property, crk at back bndry, 2 b/r western red cedar cottage with hardwood floors, claw foot bath, composting toilet, lovely organic gardens. Very private, surrounded by larger properties. Five mins to h/way & shops. \$85,000. Ph: 07-5485-7067.

CRYSTAL WATERS, hinterland Sunshine Coast, 27 km Maleny, 1 ac f/hold, rammed earth & timber house, 4 b/rs, loft, modern kit, estab orchard, garden, chook pen, 2 sheds, wonderful setting, \$160,000. Contact Nigel: 07-5494-4625.

PEACE PRIVACY, 160 ac, 30 mins Warwick, 2 hrs Brisbane. Abundant wildlife, well timbered, spring-fed dam, sml clearing with cabin, tank, ph, fenced. Ph: 07-4064-8299, or 07-4061-2554.

Don't forget to include your area code with your phone number. It's best to set it out as 00-0000-0000.

GRASSIFIEDS

PLACING AN AD?

See page 73 for details

KOOKABURRA PARK ECO-VILLAGE. You can join us and go into the 21st century with hope and love. There are now freehold building lots available in Stage 3. The price for these lots among the gum trees is \$35,000. For more info, ph: Barry or Christine on 07-4157-2850, or Grant on 07-4157-2759, or look at our web site. <http://www.sunweb.net/kooka>. We can make a difference. We only have to believe that we can.

ROCKY TOP FARMS - TOOWOOMBA, 407 ac, cottage, sheds, yards. Running crk, well, mono pump (450 psi). Timbered, private mountain, 250 m above valley. \$160,000. Ph: 0412-843-865

CONONDALE, SUNSHINE COAST HINTERLAND, 28 km Maleny, 4 ac, fully fenced, power, school bus, rural outlook. \$58,000. Consider exchange for dwelling on sml acreage in Tasmania. Ph: 07-5494-4538 after 7pm.

CHILDERS, ORGANIC FARM, 100 ac. Solar, compost loo, 4 bed house. Separate kitchen & studio. Three dams, irrigation. All work done, going concern. Fruit trees, cultivation, gardens, bush, timber. \$138,900. Ph: 07-4126-1172.

SERENE PEACEFUL LIVING, 8½ ac, 30 mins to Gold Coast & Brisbane City, 3 mins Logan River & boat ramp. Three road frontages, 4 b/r low-set brick home, main with en suite, separate lounge, dining, lge family room, 3-car port, lock-up workshop, fernery, dam & pump. School bus, 10 mins major shops & railway. Private sale. Ph: 07-3287-1674.

CHINCHILLA, NATURE GETAWAY, 250 ac, 30 km to town. School bus close by, ph, lge shed, 6000 gal polywater tank, near-complete cabin, lge dam, chook pens. \$65,000 ONO. Ph: John, 07-4669-1108 evenings.

NORTH ROCKHAMPTON, for sale 50 ac in 100 ac property. Price \$30,000. Prefer adults, person(s) interested in permaculture. Some finance avail. Ph: Monica 018-531-631.

GIN GIN 37 ac, 25 km from town, well timbered, views, ph avail. Must sell. \$17,000. Ph: 07-4161-2508.

MALANDA, ONE HECTARE, 6 m x 10 m cavity block shed, f/trees, town water, power, school bus, mail delivery. Ph: Robert, 07-4096-5666.

SUNSHINE COAST HINTERLAND, 40 organic ac, modern 3 b/r house 270° views, garden, f/trees. \$147,000. All the info at www.ozbiznet.com.farm.html Ph: 07-5483-6736.

GEORGETOWN, GOLDFIELDS, 2½ ac, f/hold, fenced, elec, T'water, \$4,000. Ph: 07-4096-2950.

CHUWAR, THIRTY-FIVE KILOMETRES WEST BRISBANE (10 mins Ipswich), ¾ ac native bush, gorgeous new 3 b/r 2 storey mud brick & timber pole home, lge decks, open plan, cathedral ceilings, polished floors, composting toilet, solar HW, tank water, fully landscaped. Quiet semi-rural area, easy access to amenities/uni. \$205,000. Ph: 07-3201-4723.

FIVE ACRES, VIEWS, power, ph, good soil, water, tarred roads, school bus, 10 mins nth Warwick, 45 mins Toowoomba, 1 hr Brisbane. URGENT SALE. \$23,800. Ph: 07-5493-5885.

CAPE TRIBULATION, 5 ac lowland tropical r/forest, elevated block, semi-perm crk, located away from mainstream tourism, close to beach. Cape Tribulation headland 10 mins walk. \$85,000. Ph: 07-4098-3372.

SIX KILOMETRES SOUTH OF RAVENSHOE, nth Queensland, 327 ac, 60% planted with plantation trees incl Caribbean, lemon scented gums, rose gums and tallowwood currently selling as poles for pole houses, electricity poles & fenceposts. Price \$300,000 ONO. Contact Judy, 07-3379-8365, or Sue, 03-5822-1254.

GIN GIN, 9.7ha (22+ ac), good dam site, elev home site, power/ph to block. \$40,000. Ph: 02-6947-6250, 07-4954-3003.

GIN GIN TWENTY-FOUR ACRES, timbered, good soil, fully fenced. \$28,000 ONO. Ph: 07-4743-2114.

HEAVENLY HIDEAWAY – 'Fern Gully' – 1 hr Toowoomba, Dalby, Kingaroy; 3 hrs Brisbane, 150 ac, ½ vine scrub, ½ ironbark/gum forest, raise calves etc. Forty ac cultivation – good water, fences. Renovated Queenslander. Cyprus – no white ants, good TV. All equipment – tractor, header etc, old but working. Ph/power, school bus. WIWO \$180,000 ONO. Ph: 02-6646-3216.

COORAN NOOSA HINTERLAND, 1½ ac, ph, power, water, elevated mtn views, birdlife abundant, shop/schools/train nearby. \$49,900 – open to swaps, deposit of land for house. Ph: 07-5441-2161/0415-664-130.

BOONAH/MAROON DAM, scenic rim mountain retreat, 22 ac, rich soil, magnif views, new pole house, 4 b/r, split level, polished floors, solar power, lighting/water, gas, 2 tanks, town water, crk, 3 dams (1 spring fed), 4 berth garage, double c/port, 25 m greenhouse with irrigation, tractor/slasher, 15 mins – Boonah, 1 hr 15 mins – Brisbane. Forced sale. \$215,000 ONO. Ph: 07-5463-6204.

BERAJONDO, 40 undulating ac, plenty of natural bushland, ideal alternative lifestyle. Lge livable shed + 20 x 10 shed, bus for accom. Fully fenced, 3 good sized dams, 3 r/water tanks. One hr to Bundaberg & 1770, close to good fishing & nat pks. On the school bus run & daily postal. \$75,000. Ph: 07-4152-8895.

QUEENSLAND, DREAM BLOCK at Saddle Tree Creek, near Maidenhead, 3 ha of r/forest paradise adjoining Bunya Nat Pk, rich soil, native fauna, space to breathe pure air. 2½ hrs to Brisbane, 1½ hrs to Sunshine Coast. \$20,000 ONO. Ph/fax: 02-6241-4580.

BLACKBUTT, RETIREMENT UNIT on acreage, fully self-contained, 2 b/rs, open plan living. One of two only. Strata title. Ideal country living in ranges 1½ hrs from Brisbane. \$53,000. Ph: 07-4163-0725.

BLACKBUTT AREA. One hundred ac offering a balance of beautiful untouched nat bush and cleared land, enjoy the clean, healthy air 1500 ft above sea level. Stock your own dam with fish and enjoy walking through many of the bush tracks. Very quiet and private, excellent for self-suff. \$75,000 neg. Ph owner 07-4163-0274.

PROPERTY FOR SALE

QUEENSLAND

GYMPIE AREA, 376 ac ex-dairy, undulating hilly, r/forest, spotted gum, valuable timber. Grow anything scrub soils, previously small crops, bananas. Five dams, hut, ph, power. Very private, adjoins forestry. \$295,000. Possible terms. Ph: 07-5442-7444 AH.

VICTORIA

BONANG, EAST GIPPSLAND, 3 b/r modern home, 1 ac, 20 mins Errinundra. Tingaringi & Snowy River Nat Pks, 20 mins Delegate River trout stream. \$60,000. Ph: 03-5156-0895.

SEA LAKE, 2 b/r house, elec, town water, elec cooking & shower, gas heating, garden shed \$19,950. Ph: agent, 03-9852-3322.

FREE - COUNTRY PROPERTY CATALOGUE, available now! Land from only \$5000. Ph: agent, 03-9852-3322.

LAKE LAANECORIE, 50 ac, only 1km to Lake, crk on land. \$45,000. Ph: agent, 03-9852-3322.

A SHACK ON FIFTY ACRES, mostly treed, sandy loam soil, gently undulating in peaceful area! \$29,500. Ph: agent, 03-9852-3322.

WAGGARANDALL-ST JAMES, 28 ac + comfy 3 b/r w/b farmhouse in central location. Fully fenced, excel growing land, 20 ac sown to wheat, huge dam on good water supply. School bus handy. Quiet & peaceful, breathtaking sunsets. Murray River 20 mins, 30 mins Shepparton. \$95,000. Ph: Elders, 03-5744-3666.

BEAUTIFUL EILDON, 25 km to Alexandra, 4 ac hobby farm in lovely setting. Large 4 b/r modern home, BIRs, en suite, rumpus, walk-in-pantry, 4 car garage, f/trees + 20 m x 30 m area under nets growing blueberries, raspberries, strawberries etc, estab markets. Tank & bore water. \$168,000. Ph: 02-6654-0314 AH.

GET LOST! 189 ac (80 ha) hidden gullies, secluded tracks. Shy koalas, kangaroos, native birds etc in a world of your own. This well maintained Stoney-Rises cattle - property is divided into 3 main paddocks, about 1/2 cleared. Hayshed, cattle troughs, water. Solid, snug, insulated 4 b/r stonehome with return verandah, power, H/W, ph, woodheater, f/trees. Needs finishing touches. Home-built from home-grown rocks. Stoneyford (beyond Colac). Anticipate quick sale. \$125,000. Fred Lynch (Johnston's Estate Agents), Ph: 03-5231-5011. AH 03-5231-2108, or owner, George Read, 03-5232-2289.

SOUTH GIPPSLAND RETREAT: BUFFALO, secluded 2 b/r Western Red Cedar home on 2 1/2 ac adj approx 9 ac bush reserve (lease held). North facing windows, slate floors (excluding b/rs), pine lined & insulated. Solar/elec HW, wood heater. Double garage/shed. Water tanks approx 12,000 gal. Stockyard, elec fences. General store/PO & primary school 5 mins walk. Leongatha, Foster 25 km, 1 hr Wilsons Prom, 2 1/2 hr Melb. Well maintained. Part furnished. \$93,000. Ph: 03-9328-1498.

**Make Your editor smile -
Punctuate when writing ads for
Grass Roots Grassifieds**

GRASSIFIEDS

DEADLINES: GR134 - AUG 30TH
GR135 - OCT 30TH

LIFESTYLE WITH HISTORY, only 25 mins from thriving tourism towns Echuca/Moama. This property (circa 1860s) offers unique opportunities for either ecotourism eg B & B, horse rides, studio/gallery setup or just a relaxing retreat. Its 3 ac f/hold 8 ac lease is situated within the Barmah Forest with crk frontage & adj to Murray River & lakes. It has a lge, spacious 3 b/r w/b home + 2 b/r cottage (part restored) + restored building (historic former Wine Palace). Excellent workshop 50 ft x 25 ft, concrete floor, 3 phase power + 56 ft x 30 ft shed. Established gardens, f/trees on black sandy loam, 9 meg water right and surrounded by the redgum forest. Plenty to tell the genuine enquirer. \$195,000. Ph: owners on 03-5869-3358.

STRATH CREEK, 4 b/r mud brick character home with all-round verandahs on 50 ac, 15 mins from schools, Hume Freeway, trains, 1 hr to Melbourne. Price \$210,000. Ph: owner, 03-5784-9263.

SOUTH-WEST VICTORIA, 4.5 ac, neat 3 b/r home, c/port, verandahs, lovely gardens, many f/trees, chook pen 36' x 20' shed, 2 sml sheds, 2 fenced paddocks (ideal for crops or horses), water tanks (10,000 gal), spring-fed crk (perm water), successful organic crop grown (certified through NASSA). Excellent potential to earn income. Great family home & hobby farm. URGENT SALE \$75,000. Ph: 07-4946-5938.

GOONGERAH, FAR EAST GIPPSLAND, loft home. All amenities, perm crks, r/forest, school. \$75,000. Ph: 03-5155-4489.

AVOCA DISTRICT, BARKLEY, Pyrenees wine region, 2.8 ac farmland, elec nearby. \$12,500. Contact: Beverley, 03-9888-1327.

CHARMING COUNTRY COTTAGE at McMahons Creek, Warburton 10 mins, 2 1/2 private, landscaped ac, dam, lge shed. Post & beam construction with mud brick infill combining colonial atmosphere with modern amenities. Huge living area, 20' cathedral ceiling, 100 yr old brick floor t/out. Double b/r, lge loft, family bathroom, laundry. Open fire, s/c stove, gas hot water, power, ph. On school bus route, primary & secondary. Building permit & plans to extend to lge family home. Extension site prepared. Vacant possession. Price \$92,000. Ph: 03-5156-4652.

TASMANIA

HUON VALLEY, 5.3 ha suitable for organic farming with mature forest on about 1/2 of area. Three b/r house, workshop (6 x 10 m), art studio (5.5 x 11.5 m), double c/port & lge potting shed. The house is set in lge cottage gardens with perm crk frontage & views of the Huon River. \$130,000. Ph: 02-6288-5851 AH or 02-6281-8228 BH for detailed info.

GREAT BAY, BRUNY ISLAND, 60 km from Hobart. Approximately 3 ac medium slope, views nth across Great Bay, D'entrecasteaux Channel to Mt Wellington. Car ferry at Kettering; \$30,000. Ph: 03-6260-6384.

OYSTER COVE, 30 km south of Hobart, 1.8 ha nth facing slope, well estab mainly native, fertile organic garden with lge poly hothouse, orchard, fenced paddock & bush block, 30,000 lt r/water capacity, dam & well water reticulated t/out, fire & elec pump & gravity feed. 18 square celery top pine clad timber home, mezzanine floors, exposed rafters, built-ins galore, sun-filled passive solar bathroom, big kitchen. Separate 5 sq wooden pole frame mezzanine studio with own amenities & lge corrugated iron shed with brick floor. Original mud puddling technique in extensive low impact outdoor living areas of verandahs, decks, brick paving & garden walls. \$130,000 firm. Ph: 03-6267-5085.

WYNWARD, BEAUTIFUL NORTH-WEST COAST of Tasmania, secluded 8.5 ac of pasture & lge eucalyptus bush only 5 km from town. Lovely country & sea views. Quality 3 b/r mud brick home. Combustion stove & central heating system. Well insulated, cosy in winter, cool in summer. Tas timbers used throughout. Deep-litter hen house, workshop & barns, all with mains power. Stockyards, cubby house, lge dam with elec pump, 10,000 gal tank & r/w tank. Well established organic vegie garden & orchard. \$150,000. Ph: 03-6442-3253.

NORTH-EAST TASMANIA, 50 ac bush block, excel building sites, sheltered, nth aspect, 7 km to St Helens, 2 km to beach, school bus, power & ph avail, plenty trees, priced to sell. \$45,000. Ph: 07-4939-8468.

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

PIPERS RIVER, LARGE HOUSE on 44 ac, crk, spring dam, gum & some tea tree. \$140,000. Details ph/fax: 08-8337-6032.

KANGAROO ISLAND: half-acre block, sea-views, near Penneshaw/school bus/shop. Minute from endless beach/lagoon. Wildlife, peace, paradise \$16,500. Ph/fax: 08-8379-2519.

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

BROOME 200 km from Fitzroy River frontage, 3143 ac: 2200 special agricultural lease, 943 f/hold. Abundance of water, house, cottage, workshop, generator, bores, 100 head of cattle. Suitable for ecotourism, horticulture & aquaculture \$450,000 ONO. Ph: 08-9192-1402. PO Box 1552, BROOME 6725.

COMMUNITIES/SHARES

MID NORTH COAST - CREATIVE ARTIST STUDIO. Upper Landsdowne, 30 mins from Taree. Share in 200 ac. House and studio and kilns, timber pole house, lge decks, solar hot water, spa, fully set up potter's studio and 2 lge wood-fired pottery kilns, shelves, dough maker etc. Creative, ideal inspirational working environment, head of the river swimming holes, very peaceful. Subtropical, some fruit trees. Price \$96,000 ONO incl 2 shares and all above. Contact: Sergio Sill, 02-4340-1784.

COMMUNITIES/SHARES

COHOUSING GROUP FORMING, MALENY QLD. Ph/fax: Noah, 07-5429-6245.

FAR NORTH COAST, 20 km from Murwillumbah, 1/4 share of 186 ac (mostly forest). New 6 x 6 m Colorbond shed with verandah (insulated & lined), 5000 gal concrete tank + 1000 gal header tank, 2 dams, solar power, gas stove, hot water & fridge, NE aspect. \$70,000. Ph: 02-6679-5046.

FAR NORTH COAST, 35 km NW Lismore, beautiful solid spacious home, wide verandahs, elevated position, extensive views, 4 ac, u/house garage & workshop. Organic gardens, f/trees. Complete privacy, power, ph, cabin, u/cover c/van. Secure strata development. School buses. \$159,000. Ph: 02-6633-7033.

PERMACULTURE PARADISE, 1/2 share on community, 2.7 km from Nimbin. Two timber dwellings - open plan, loft and verandahs overlooking beautiful Nimbin Valley. Naturally landscaped gardens filled with an abundance of plant species, 100s of palms, natives & bamboos, ponds & veggie garden; 500 & 1000 gal tanks, 2 nurseries, good access. Community has common orchards, spring-fed dams, laundry & workshop facilities. \$78,000 ONO. Ph: Andi 02-6688-2381. Email: andi_islinger@hotmail.com

EIGHTY KILOMETRES WEST OF MARYBOROUGH Qld, 10 ac share in 1300 ac MO, 200 ac occupied, remainder common ground. One b/r house, lock-up garage, workshop, sheds, ph, solar panels, inverter, gas fridge. Seasonal crk tank/well water. Adjoins nat pk. \$17,000. Ph: 07-4165-1350 evenings.

BLUE KNOB - 12km from Nimbin, 1/7 share of 110 ac, with perm crk, backing on to nat pk. Six ac forested block with views to Lillian Rock, good access, ph connection, and an old shed on site with running water, \$35,000 ONO. Ph: 07-3217-2103.

UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY, share for sale on slopes of Wollumbin. Experience the power of the millennium. Full details: The Advertiser, PO Box 107, UKI 2484. Ph: 02-6672-8780.

MID NORTH COAST, on upper reaches of Taylors Arm River, west of Macksville. Stone & timber home. Solar H/W, solar elec (12V) with generator backup, ph, tractor, slasher etc. Permanent crk frontage with swimming hole. Beautiful r/forest lifestyle or retreat. Offered as 1/3 share of 40 ac. \$74,000. Ph: owner, 02-6559-8342.

SERENDIPITY, WOODBURN LOT E. Exclusive possession by lease of 4 ha of forest with large clear area sloping to a big dam suitable for swimming and water supply. Many fruit trees, other plants, native animals. Close to National Park and beach. Adjacent to Pacific Highway, school bus available. Part of a council approved multiple occupancy for 13 home sites. Well run, harmonious community which has a community tennis court, tractor and implements. Also available \$3,000 community contribution for road upgrade upon conversion of shed to permanent home.

GRASSIFIEDS

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See page 73 for details

BUSINESS FOR SALE

RE-GREEN NURSERY AND GARDEN SUPPLIES, on 2.18 ac, incl lge 3 b/r ranch style home with verandahs, i/ground pool & BBQ area. Double lock-up garage, bush surroundings, 1 km from lge expanding central Victorian town. Three lge dams with excell catchment, extensive watering systems, landscaped gardens, permaculture growing areas. Fully equipped wholesale & retail nursery, growing & propagation facilities, cedar sales shop, garden supply bays. Family business built up over 12 yrs incl network of outlets providing a good estab income. Trained staff. Genuine reason for sale. Flexible settlement. Will train. F/hold \$125,000 + stock, much under true price. Ph: owner, 03-5461-4741.

FOR RENT/ CARETAKER WANTED

RETREAT TO PRETTY COTTAGE on 1 ha: 1/2 hr Warwick, 2 hrs Brisbane. Verandahs, part furn, crk, quiet road. Large b/r, living, kitchen, bathroom, loft. \$90 pw + power. No pets. Ph: 07-4666-1102.

RETREAT/NATURE farm 80 ac Ballarat district, 90 mins Melb. Peaceful stone cottage in need of repairs & some extra work to be livable, on lake's edge. View trout jumping & abundant wildlife from all windows. Garden conscious people to look after many deciduous & weeping trees in garden areas. Suit artists, or grow or graze whatever, dogs or horses. Five ac lake with fauna islands totally secluded clear farm in middle of state forest pk. Extra long-term lease & proposal invited. Apply for details write to: PO Box 422, DAYLESFORD 3460.

PERSON(S) TO SHARE OR RENT house, van site, Hunter bush block, 60 km Newcastle. Terms negotiable, vegetarian nonsmokers preferred. Ph: 02-4938-2036.

FREE RENT TO DRUG-FREE TENANT in exchange for maintaining house & gardens. Sml house furnished, f/trees, herbs, river frontage lge garage/shed. In sml friendly village at edge of New England Tableland, 43 km nth of Tamworth. Ph/fax: 02-4787-1754.

CARAVAN EN SUITE, power, own garden. Beautiful bushland property 100 km nth Perth, near coast. Exchange cleaning. Must have own c/van, love animals. Seasonal work avail area. Ph: 08-9575-7657.

SOUTH COAST, caretaker 40+, n/d, n/s, responsible. Care of garden & animals. Self-cont cabin, low rent. Ph: 02-4457-1514.

*Please print your ad clearly
so we can do likewise*

WANTED TO RENT/ CARETAKE

WANTED, RURAL CAIRNS/TABLELANDS. Couple seek dwelling with acreage for small herb/market garden & GR lifestyle. Please contact: K Mitchell, KURANDA PO, 4872, or leave message 07-4053-4041.

HOUSE IN REASONABLE CONDITION in exchange for minimum rent, willing to maintain & improve property. Grown up family. Maximum 1 hr radius Brisbane, perm residence required or rent/buy arrangement, 2 to 3 b/rs. Excellent references. Ph: Trish, 0417-371-934.

ORGANIC FARM, NAMBOR. I am looking for 2 to 5 ac to rent, lease or rent/buy option. I will consider share farming, work/rent exchange or a caretaking position. The land should be suitable for goats and organic farming, and have a house and shed. Please contact by phone 07-4944-1480 after 5pm or write to Ms A Lillman, 10/92 Milton St, MACKAY 4740.

PROPERTY WANTED

LAND WANTED, 20-100 ac, b/ween Nambucca NSW & the Sunshine Coast, Qld, permanent clean river, crk & dam water. Northeast facing, r/forest areas desirable. Valley views & breezes. Large house or good home site. Close to positive primary & high schools & town, but within 30 mins of the ocean. Under \$150,000. Ring Karen, 02-9547-1293.

ONE HUNDRED ACRES PLUS, natural vegetation, secluded, river frontage, VIC/NSW, services not required. Ph: 03-5981-2177.

FIFTY PLUS ACRES, wanted at least 50 km inland from CBD of Grafton or Casino for \$20,000. Must have spring or crk, good soil and power (phone?). Phone Lisa on: 02-4229-3733.

WANTED, LAND BETWEEN EBOR & GRAFTON, Tabulam. Clean perm crk with reasonable access, perhaps dwelling. Call Michael, 02-9519-4710.

WANTED

RECLUSIVE, AWARE, KINDLY WWOOFER wanted, forest-inclined (near) vegetarian for Christian retreat. Ph: 07-4669-4045.

SPIRITUALLY MINDED, capable, multi-skilled, incl carpentry, person willing & able to live 6-12 months on beautiful property 30 km Cann River, East Gippsland. Work in exchange for good food, comfortable accom, very sml wage. Ph: Rhee 03-5158-3243.

WANTED, SMALL CABIN WITH POWER, 5+ ac for organic single male, NSW mid/nth coast, rent/rent buy pref. Small deposit, references. Ph: David, 02-6654-0956.

LIVE SNAILS WANTED. Ph: 02-9449-5734.

NEEDED, STRONG PERSON with knowledge of nursery to assist setting up of native nursery. Free accom for work. Sense of fun and love of animals essential. Tasmania's east coast. Apply to: Sue, PO Box 32, ST MARYS 7215. Ph: 03-6376-2777.

WANTED

LITTLE ARK FLOUR MILL, EC. Ph: 03-9497-2962.

OPPORTUNITIES

CO-ORDINATOR – paid position available – to develop permaculture/sustainable living demonstration house & garden, adj. to University of NSW & an adjunct to the permaculture community garden. Enq contact: Mathew McLennan, 2/179 Doncaster Ave, KENSINGTON 2033. Or email: Paul Osmond: p.osmond@unsw.edu.au

NEEM THE MIRACLE HERB. See Health and Beauty.

FREE ACCOMMODATION for nice, single, happy going young mum on lush acreage near coast. Beautiful retreat. Ph: John, 02-4996-4158. PO Box 64, RAYMOND TERRACE, 2324 NSW.

SPARE HOUSE ON FARM. Could exchange help for rent. Some part-time work avail, suit woman n/s, interested in rural lifestyle, child OK. PO Box 320, GAYDAH 4625.

EARTHFEST 99: December 27 - January 2. A celebration of community & the environment at 'Baringa' near Wangaratta, nth Victoria. Spaces avail for workshops & stalls. For more info please contact: Earthfest on 07-3511-6537, or email: earthfest@yahoo.com

ARE YOU LOOKING for an alternative lifestyle away from cities crime & pollution. We are looking for a hardworking individual or couple to farmhand/caretake on a long-term basis. Accommodation is modest but food is plentiful, incl wide range of berries, f/trees, livestock & 1/2 ac vineyard. Share all this on a perm WWOOF – type basis. Ph: Mike or Robyn on 03-6352-7352.

PUBLICATIONS

'WHY FARM RABBITS?' Shed design, breeding, health, nutrition, set-up costs, costs, returns, breeding programme. Ph: 02-6558-8287.

'NATIVE STINGLESS BEES' for profit or pleasure – how to get started, Pollination/honey potential in Queensland. Detailed info booklets, packed with photographs, diagrams. For free catalogue, send name, address & 45c stamp to: ANBRC, Box 74-G4, NORTH RICHMOND 2754.

'NIMBIN NEWS MAGAZINE', is a co-operative-run access magazine with articles & information from Nimbin and other areas. We cover concerns relevant to alternative lifestyles & others looking for the most sustainable way. We are one of the longest running alternative magazines & the Nimbin bioregion is at the forefront in the development of sustainable systems. As networkers we scan many mags for suitable & scarce information for our readers. Subscription: 6 editions for \$18, sample \$3.50. Back copies 5 for \$12 posted. PO Box 209, NIMBIN 2480.

BOOKS, OLD AND NEW. Send for general list. R Suters, PO Box 127, FIGTREE 2525.

BOOKS, NEW AND OLD. Australian, lifestyle, Pacific, biography, horticulture, gardening, outdoors. Lists avail. BA & JM Wallace, Box 325, PORTLAND 3305.

GRASSIFIEDS

DEADLINES: GR134 – AUG 30TH
GR135 – OCT 30TH

HOME EDUCATION, for info send SAE to: Alternative Education Resource Group, PO Box 71, CHIRNSIDE PARK 3116.

'NEW VEGETARIAN & NATURAL HEALTH', the magazine of the Natural Health & Vegetarian Societies. Subscribe today, \$30 yearly and receive: 4 vital magazines, discounts at participating health food stores and natural therapies practitioners, listed in magazine. Head Office, 28/541 High St, PENRITH, NSW 2750. Ph: 0247-215-068.

EARTHWORMS. Books & videos on all aspects of worm farming: for profit, gardening, bait, waste management. Free book list from WormWide books, 4 Poppet Rd(G), WAMBOIN, NSW 2620. Ph: 02-6238-3577, fax: 02-6238-3017. Mobile: 0412-112-285.

PAWS IN PRINT BOOKSTORE, dog book specialists, for a free mail order catalogue send 2 x 45c stamps to: PO Box 3168, WHEELERS HILL 3150. Ph: 03-9795-9158. email: www.pawsinprint.com.au.

SUPPRESSED & UNUSUAL TECHNOLOGIES CATALOGUE, free energy devices, antigravity, hydrogen fuel, magnetic motors, alternate fuels & engines, high mileage, 200+ topics. Send 5 x Aust 45c stamps to: Lostech Archive, PO Box 609 -R, RAVENSHOE, Qld 4872.

'WITNESS THE WILD KANGAROO APPLE'. Collection of poetry by potter, Elaine Muir. \$10 posted – Emu Publishing, PO Box 24, ESSENDON, 3040.

'GRASS ROOTS' copies for sale, \$2.50 for each magazine. Old Cover: 109, 110. New Cover: 111, 112, 113, 114-116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 125, 126, 128, 129, 132, 133. 'Burkes Backyard', First Issue, Sept 98, Oct 98, Nov 98, Dec 98, Jan 99, Feb 99, April 99, May 99, June 99. 'National Geographic', Full year 1998. Jan 98 to Dec 98 - 12 issues. Ph: 07-5494-6111.

A STEINER HOME SCHOOL? A parent-teacher manual, incl: curriculum, resources, bureaucracy, creativity, qualifications, discipline, and more. Send \$12 to: A Ian Whitehead, Box 33 BRUNSWICK HEADS 2483. Ph: 02-6680-3889, Fax: 02-6680-4314 - or send for titles list. email: goldenbeetlebooks@bigpond.com, www.users.bigpond.com/goldenbeetlebooks/

HANDCRAFTS

BUNDLES OF STRANDED COTTON available. Stranded cotton in bundles of 100* 8m skeins in 50 assorted colours. \$20 post free. Colours matched to dmc numbers. The big bundle of Stranded cotton of 240 colours – \$50 post free. Send 45 cent stamp for free price list. Bankcard, Mastercard, Visa, money order, cheques. Arty & Crafty, PO Box 40, DAW PARK, SA 5041. Ph: 08-8277-3763. Fax: 08-8277-9402.

Don't forget the deadline if wishing to advertise in Grass Roots

CRAFT WORKSHOP VIDEOS: Learn at home at your own pace from your personal, highly qualified instructor. VHS titles include spinning, weaving, beadwork, basketry, applique, tatting, knitting, crochet, lacemaking, felting, fabric painting and more. For full catalogue send long SAE to: Quick Spin Wool, Dept GR, RMB 1215, Shelford Rd, MEREDITH 3333. Ph/fax: 03-5286-8224.

WAX SUPPLIES for all crafts, candle, beeswax, sealing wax, sculpturing & colour dyes, wick, polish and advice. Ring or write: Handful Wax, PO Box 87, LAKE MUNMORAH 2259. Ph: 02-4358-1224.

BEADS! BEADS! BEADS: Unique selections of handmade glass, metal and wooden beads. Also findings, threads and kits available. Cost \$8 for samples, colour copy and info. Write to: Tsunami, PO Box 129, WALPOLE 6398.

GOOD MIXTURE AUSTRALIAN SEEDPODS for wreaths, decorations, novelties. Includes instructions & postage. \$26. Bushland Crafts, PO Box 309, KINGSCOTE 5223.

FOUR SHAFT FLOOR LOOM with 48 inch width. Excel condition. \$600 ONO. Ph: 03-5628-9511 evenings.

HEALTH & BEAUTY

HANDMADE PURE VEGETABLE OIL SOAPS.

These natural soaps are suitable for people who have sensitive or problem skin. For a product brochure send SAE to: Bushcraft Soaps, Lot 3 Counter Rd, M/S 591, GYMPIE 4570. Ph: 07-5486-7299.

NATURAL DIETARY SUPPLEMENTS at discount rates. Oxichel, Emugen – Herbanol, Pharmalliance Products. Please send \$5 and SAE for sample tablet tray and brochures to: Brian O'Riley, PO Box 1351, MURRAY BRIDGE, SA 5253, or ph: 08-8531-1411.

NEEM THE MIRACLE HERB. As seen on The Best of Landline. Neem & sunlight, the best cure in the world for psoriasis. Patented in USA as a cure for malaria. Our unique neem soap contains 43 important medicinal properties. Head lice, acne, eczema, ringworm, scabies, cuts, wounds, fungal infections, burns, bites etc? Produced with certified organic neem leaf oil & dry neem leaf powder. Damaged skin. Regenerative and restructuring properties. Skin cancer? Mine went in 4 months. No 'secret' ingredients. It's been around for 4500 years. Also certified organic neem oils. Agents & retail outlets required for this marvellous product. Skin care clinics, aged care, naturopathic, Chinese, herbal medicine practitioners, organic/health retailers, hospital. Information & price list email neemtree@zipworld.com.au or stamped A4 SAE to: The Neem Machine, PO Box 7139, St Kilda Rd, MELBOURNE, Vic 3004.

QUALITY SOAPS, HANDMADE with the finest vegetable oils, essential oils & fragrances. We take pride in our soaps, the attractive packaging, the reasonable prices. You won't be disappointed. Send SAE for brochure to: Saffrons Earthly Pleasures, PO Box 5162, GLADSTONE, 4680.

HEALTH & BEAUTY

MAGNETIC FIELD THERAPY – medical magnets for arthritis, sports injuries, headaches, all joint & muscular problems. Bio Magnatural Living. Ph: 02-9587-2920 AH.

GREEN BARLEY, STEVIA, HERBAL FIBRE: mail order: Wollnick, GPO Box 2859, Brisbane, 4001 (SAE). <http://www.geocities.com/HotSprings/Sauna/6571>.

BREAST ENLARGEMENT BY HYPNOSIS, now on cassette programme. Safe, relaxing, proven. Send cheque/money order \$79, PAN, Dept G, Box K1130, Haymarket, Sydney 2000. **NATURAL PAIN RELIEF WITHOUT DRUGS**, for arthritis, muscular pain, cramps, period pains etc. For free info send SAE to: J & G Lilley, 7 Blokland Ct, MS 231, HATTON VALE, QLD 4341.

FOOD AND KITCHEN

BEE POLLEN, no additives, 450 g sample pack \$10. 1.9 kg pack \$35, 4.3 kg pack \$70, 14 kg drum \$185. Prices include p&p. JM Read, 8 River St, MURRAY BRIDGE, SA 5253.

HOME STONE FLOUR MILLS – mill your own stoneground wholemeal flour for cakes and bread at home with a Retsel Little Ark stone flour mill. Endorsed by Housewives Association. Write for catalogue to: Retsel Distributors, PO Box 712, DANDENONG 3175, encl 3 postage stamps. Ph: 03-9795-2725. Distributor enquiries welcome.

MISCELLANEOUS

HELP SAVE KAKADU from the Jabiluka uranium mine. Ring the Jabiluka Hotline now: 02-9552-2355 Jocelyn.

HANDYMEN WANTED! Full or part-time. Three different almost unknown businesses you can run from home. No opposition. I've retired so the secrets can be yours. No canvassing or mail order. Start with \$50 capital. Details free. Send SAE to Peter Gardner, 13 Harlequin St (PO Box 571), LIGHTNING RIDGE 2834.

NATURAL SKIN CARE PRODUCTS, hand-made soaps & candles. Send SAE for catalogue of over 120 products. Forest Edge, 242 Albert St, MARYBOROUGH 4650.

TRIDENT TIPIS. Professional workmanship, quality materials, traditional designs. For brochure, samples and prices write to: 'Earth Mother Craft', Lot 107, Cedar Creek Road, via MILLFIELD, 2325. Ph: 049-981-659.

RADIATION-FREE SMOKE ALARMS, battery (\$45) or mains (\$52), photoelectric, postage \$4.50. Ph: 03-5154-0151. 3D Lights, RSD GOONGERAH 3888.

HOW TO MAKE MONEY selling & making chess pieces, bird baths, fine art, gnomes etc. Plaster and/or cement moulds. For methods + catalogue send \$14.95 to: Williams Imports, PO Box 989, SOUTHPORT 4215 (06/50 Railway St). Ph/fax: 07-5532-9050.

MAXICULTURE. THE BEST FORM OF LAND USE is gardening. The best form of gardening is maxiculture. True sustainability. Small book, \$10 posted, from Jim, 13 McCord Road, TWO WELLS 5501.

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SEPTIC TANKS – HOW TO BUILD or how to maintain one. Don't desludge! Treat the cause, Booklet \$20. HG Stephens, PO Box 18, EAST MELBOURNE 3002. Ph: 03-9510-3192.

TIPIS, 10' - 22', from \$460. Colonial tents, tarps, awnings, annexes, canopies, tonneau covers, swag rolls. Leather, deerskin, suede clothing, any size, any design, yours or ours. Western and Indian style fringed gear a speciality. Wholesale prices. Bojo Products, BENALLA. Ph: 03-5762-2145, 0412-368-035. Tipi hire available.

'TIC INTERNATIONAL' MAGAZINE, 40 pages of books, hobbies, travel, penpals, health, collectables, employment, money making opportunities. Something for everyone. 5 x 45¢ stamps. Box 496E, MORISSET, 2264.

BUCKWHEAT PILLOWS: Australian grown buckwheat husks with no pesticides. 100% Australian milled cotton cover. \$45 incl postage. Just Natural Ventures 03-9481-1872. justnatural@bigfoot.com - Trade enquiries welcome.

LUCKY CHARM BAGS, (Audaces Fortuna Juvat), "Luck does not favour hesitation". Send \$5 to JMS, PO Box 1185, GRIFFITH, NSW 2680.

COURSES

CORRESPONDENCE – PERMACULTURE DESIGN Course. On completion you will have a full permaculture design & management plan for a property of your choice – to suit your needs. For more info contact: Annie Jenkins, PO Box 710, MALANDA, QLD 4885. Ph: 07-4096-6595, or email: nastus@hotmail.com

HERBAL MEDICINE. The School of Herbal Medicine, estab in Australia in 1985, offers a 1 year home study course. For details, write to PO Box 2310, TOOWOOMBA 4350.

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STONEMASONRY, various applications, various materials, reputable teacher – world travelled mason, 3 days late Sept. Mountain Wilderness Southern QLD. Ph: 0412-051-309.

PERMACULTURE DESIGN COURSES for the SE of Australia, 2 week residential courses from 13th to 27th Nov 99 & Easter 2000. Contact: H Gravestine, 02-6494-2014.

NEWCASTLE AND HUNTER VALLEY – two day permaculture course, Sept 18th & 25th. Design, consultancy & landscaping services also avail. For info ph: Andrew Murdoch, 02-4950-4134.

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PUREBRED POULTRY – FERTILE EGGS. Plymouth Rocks, Faverolles \$25/doz. Partridge Wyandottes, Speckled Sussex, Rhode Island Reds, \$30/doz. Freight, \$11/doz, \$15/2 doz. Heritage Poultry Stud. Ph: 08-8836-7242.

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BAMBOO PLANTS, lge range, best prices. Ph: 07-4129-4470, fax: 07-4129-0130.

TREE GUARDS all shapes/sizes from under 10 cents each. Bamboo stakes and weedmats. International Reforestation Supplies, 510 Bellbird Rd, BAIRNSDALE 3875. Ph/fax: 03-5157-9404.

TOBACCO SEEDS. Organically grown. Seeds and instructions \$5. E Madge, PO Box 114, POMONA, Qld 4568. (MS626).

TOBACCO SEED. Organically grown (Virginian), cultivation and curing notes included. Send \$5 to Lyn O'Brien, C/- PO, BARMAH 3639.

RAINFOREST SEED COLLECTORS national link-up. Buy and sell local seed. Our newsletter has lots to offer. Local seed grows better and doesn't pollute your gene pool. Quarterly newsletter subs \$20, concession \$10. Offer local seed – free subs. RSC, Private Mail Bag, BELLINGEN 2454. Ph: 02-6655-2233.

LOOKING FOR HERITAGE or traditional fruits & vegetables? Join the Heritage Seed Curators Association. Our regular 'Seed Listing' winter issue of The Curator lists the sources for thousands of vegie, herb & fruit varieties. Our summer issue has major articles, tips and notes about saving heirloom varieties. Membership costs \$25 PA or \$18 for low income earners. Contact HSCA, PO Box 1450, BAIRNSDALE, Vic 3875.

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GOURDS, SEEDS, BOOKS avail now! In our new catalogue. Send 4 stamps to: The Gourdfather, PO Box 298GR, East Maitland 2323.

FARMERS – HOW TO IMPROVE YOUR CROP yield and soil quality. Use worm wondercast – 100% organic pure liquid worm castings. Wondercast feeds your crop directly with its rich source of plant growth nutrients and hormones & conditions your soil by promoting microbial activity. Many farmers are experiencing pleasing results. Phone now: Worms on Earth 07-4125-2886/0417-645-929.

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SEEDSAVERS, THE ORIGINAL since 1986, 1000s rare vegetables, fruit, useful permaculture plants in seed bank & members list sent to you. Send SAE to: Box 975, BYRON BAY 2481. Ph: 02-6685-6624.

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MUD BRICK (EARTH WALL) TESTING - certificate for council. Effluent Disposal design (AS1547) for domestic premises. Soil testing. Hackett Laboratory Services, 4/8 Bellbowrie St, PORT MACQUARIE 2444. Ph: 065-832-635. Fax: 065-837-453.

PSYCHIC CLAIRVOYANT, in person or by mail. Find out about your PAST-PRESENT-FUTURE. Ph: Mandy, 0418-108-042.

FAIRYTALE PUPPET THEATRE, on holiday tour with Sleeping Beauty. Aug 8 - Sept 15 (Melbourne, inland, Ballina, eastcoast, Melbourne). Performance fee negotiable/cash/accorm/food, pre-schools, libraries, families. Ph: Chris, 03-9584-3428, 040-853-1095 anytime.

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CANON SOLAR PANELS. At last the breakthrough in price and technology that you've been waiting for! Canon's incredible super module can produce up to 5 amps charge similar to 80 watt BP & SOLAREX units, but deliver superior overall performance & value as they are shadow-tolerant, lightweight & virtually indestructible. Combine this with a 20 year warranty & you should realise why crystalline panels are now virtually obsolete, & why Energy Australia recently installed 200,000 watts of them at the new Singleton solar power station. Super deal to Grass Rooters only, only \$499. Cheap freight. Ph: Universality of The Sun, 04-1893-4607.

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DEADLINES: GR134 - AUG 30TH
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MUD BRICKS FOR SALE. Dwelling Place Inc, PO Box 15, RICHMOND, NSW 2753. Contact: Barbara, 02-4572-1489, or Anne, 02-4567-7269.

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CLUBS

AFFILIATED DONKEY SOCIETIES OF AUSTRALIA. for Info on membership, magazines and help avail write: Mr Ralph Grinly, 18 Inverness Rd, STH PENRITH NSW 2750 and you will be contacted by the representative in your state.

CALENDAR EVENTS

HERB SOCIETY OF NORTH QUEENSLAND INC, Seventh Australian Herb Conference, The Cathedral School, Townsville, 7th - 9th July 2000. Direct all enq to: PO Box 314, AITKENVALE, QLD 4814. Ph: 07-4773-6327.

HOBBY FARM EXPO, Sunday 19 September 1999, 9.00am - 5.00pm, Landsdale Farm Resource Centre, Landsdale Rd, LANDSDALE. Will incorporate everything for those who own or have dreamed of owning a small acreage property or lge garden. All enq to: Simon Leaning, 04-1993-6221 or Steve Toghil, 04-1986-3391.

KANGIA'S 1999 UNIQUE ECO-HOMES TOUR - Tweed Valley, northern NSW. Timber, mud brick, pole, ferro-cement, composting toilets, greywater systems, solar/hydro, permaculture/biodynamics & much more. October 2nd, 3rd, 4th. Guides \$20 per family avail on weekend, or from Kangia Steiner School, ph: 02-6672-4524.

HANDMADE HOUSE TOUR, 9th - 10th Oct, self-drive in Nambucca Valley NSW. Stone, timber, mud brick, sandstone, mud & sawdust, pole frame, alt energies. Proceeds to Tallowood School Bellingen. For details ph: Faye Welsh, 02-6564-4003.

MEDICINAL PLANTS FOR THE FUTURE, conference, 13th-14th August, Byron Bay area. Of interest to herbalists, therapists, herb industry, growers, wildcrafters, conservationists, herb consumers. For enq, Ph: Andrew Pengelly, 02-6548-5189.

VISION 21 ENVIRONMENTAL EXPO. Do you have a product, idea, service or technology that will improve our planet? If so, join us at the first, Vision 21 Environmental Expo from 20th to 22nd August 1999. Ph: 07-5578-2697, or email: harpgarret@winshop.com.au

BELLINGEN GLOBAL CARNIVAL '99 presents a bill of high quality music, dance and arts from Oct 1st to 4th at the Bellingen Showgrounds. Ph: 02-6655-9079, or email: carnival@midcoast.com.au

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CONTACTS NEW SOUTH WALES

CHRISTIAN SINGLES, all ages, all denominations. Send for FREE COLOUR brochure to: 5 Grange Ave, MARYLAND NSW 2287 or www2.hunterlink.net.au/singles

COUNTRY GIRL, 29, self-employed mother of 2, searching for hard-working, average looking man age 34-42 for friendship. My interests incl music, camping & photography & I enjoy a laugh. Please write: PO Box 386, NOWRA 2541, NSW.

INTELLIGENT, REALISTIC WOMAN seeks innovative partnership with man, 35-50, child/ren welcome. Please write to: Optimist (GR134), C/- PO Box 117, SEYMOUR 3661.

ATTRACTIVE LADY, slim, 40s, well travelled. Interested in sharing a self-suff lifestyle with someone who: has a GSOH, is spiritual, enjoys music, reading, cooking, animals, home life & the outdoors, is active & aware. ALA., Write to: PO Box 117, SEYMOUR 3661.

YOUNG MALE lives alone on his farm, beautiful coastal hideway, seeks happy going nice young woman as live-in companion. Ph: John, 02-4996-4158. PO Box 64, RAYMOND TERRACE, 2324 NSW.

EASY-GOING ACTIVE CHAP, young 50s, n/s, n/d, caring, GSOH, tall, slim, not unattractive. Interests: health, nature, education, art, music, dance, permaculture & touring. Buddhist similarities. Small home business & gardens, nth coast, handy to beach. Seeks affectionate, down-to-earth woman to 40s, who is self-aware, SOH, comfortable with her sensuality, presentable & has shared interests, for friendship/r/ship with equality. No fanatics or users please. Photo appreciated & returned. Reply: Larripa (GR134), C/- PO Box 117, SEYMOUR 3661.

MALE, FORTY-TWO, athletic, 178 cm, 70 kg, clean-shaven, n/s/s/d, nongambler. Seeks lady - must be health conscious, outdoors interestes, no hang-ups, nationality open, friendship/r/ship. Reply to Steve (GR134), C/- PO Box 117, SEYMOUR 3661.

LOVING, MOTIVATED MAN sought for partnership, build organic/permaculture garden to provide loving environment for you, me, my 3 children & yours. I am 39, thoughtful about what I eat & buy, not much junk or meat. You must be gentle, sensual, spritual, not afraid of intimacy as our man/woman r/ship is of great importance, 35-50 years. My interests are: theatre, film making, music. I have 50 beautiful, empty ac but need you. If you have insight, love, ability to strive in work & fun, and can contribute financially to this, or mutually agreed property elsewhere, please reply. Write: Scorpio (GR134), C/- PO Box 117, SEYMOUR 3661.

MALE, FIFTY YEARS, I live on 20 ac and I do part-time interstate truck driving. I love animals & country music, want to meet lady 38 to 50 for friendship, maybe perm r/ship, n/s, n/d. Write: Len, PO Box 298, PARKES, NSW 2870.

PLACING AN AD? See page 73 for details

GENT FORTY SEEKS LADY, 33-38, Australia wide, live outer city to farm, yours or mine. Us-single, keep fit, n/s, n/d, nonsweater, conservative, quiet, childless, like to start a family. My interests, computers, fitness, reading, recycling, agriculture, environment and self-improvement. Have frugal & workaholic tendencies. Email: imfo@start.com.au Or reply to: Imfo (GR134), C/- PO Box 117, SEYMOUR 3661.

MALE WRITER (65) welcomes correspondence with compatible ladies. Anywhere. Computing, organics, vegetarianism. Ph: 019-400-384 for address please.

AUSTRALIAN MALE, 27 years old n/s, n/d, GSOH. Seeks genuine lady for friendship/r/ship. Enjoys: Rotaract, square-dancing, bushwalking, ten-pin bowling, movies, country living. Based NW Sydney rural area. Contact: Scott, 70 Halcrows Road, CATTAL 2756.

MIDDLE AGED MAN seeks companion. Ph: 02-6661-7976.

MALE, 42 SEEKS FEMALE for friendship. I'm tall, thin, a nonsmoker & nondrinker, & live on a sml farm near Wagga Wagga. My interests are harness making, draught horses, vegetable/herb/fruit-growing, subsistence farming, country & popular music, good movies & theatre. Please write: Mark (GR 134), PO Box 117, SEYMOUR Vic 3661.

SINGLE DAD, 45, youthful, fair, 6 ft, 86 kg, 11 yr old daughter, 3 ac near river. Cedar cottage. Peaceful lifestyle, vegies, chooks, 1 cat (no dogs). Handyman, cook, nonreligious, honest, loving, broad-minded, music, beach, outdoors, etc. Seeking sincere alternative minded slim-mish female, 25/45 (1 child OK), who wants to relocate & desires a happy family home. (Light smoking/drinker OK). Exchange of photos appreciated. Write to: Lot 39, Yarragee Rd, MORUYA, 2537, or E-mail: bbsmith@moruya.com

SINGLE MALE PENSIONER, bi-sexual, 43, slim, 5'4", blue eyes, brown hair, balding top, heavy growth beard/moustache, naturist, alternative type, socialist views. Wishes to correspond/meet others around same age or younger. Interests incl environment, nature, trees, music, the 60s. Would eventually like to live an alternative lifestyle on a secluded property/cabin. Ph: Caleb, 02-6251-3181.

QUEENSLAND

SLENDER, PEACEFUL, VEGETARIAN childless woman wanted to share healers sanctuary, nonmaterialistic, spiritual lifestyle. Sanctuary (GR 133), C/- PO Box 117, SEYMOUR 3661.

ANSWERING A CONTACT AD?

Please put each letter in a separate stamped envelope addressed C/- GR. We will re-address & forward it. Don't forget to put the issue number on reply, i.e: Skye (GR 128) . . .

SPIRITUAL CONTACTS MAGAZINE making New Age connections, friendships, r/ships, groups & knowledge. Send \$5, incl P & H, PO Box 145, WAMURAN, Qld 4512. Ph: 07-5496-6707.

ACTIVE LEO MALE, mostly retired & living simple alternative lifestyle, fit & healthy, n/s, s/d, basic vegetarian, Tao/Buddhist outlook, gym-nosophist, own home in subtropics community, enjoys gardening, cooking, beach, Radio National, classical & folk music, choral singing. Dislikes sport - no TV. Seeks like-minded educated, uninhibited woman partner in 40/50s. Preference for Leo energy. Ben, C/- Box 285, FAIRFIELD 3078.

COUPLE SEEKING WOMAN. South Qld bush-based environmentalist couple (m40,f25) seek bi woman for perm r/ship incl children. Nonsmoking, vegetarian household. Please reply to: Mat, PO Box 65, DALBY 4405.

VEGETARIAN MALE, 46 years, intelligent & capable, slim & health conscious, naturally affectionate, gentle & caring. My goal is to share a peaceful, simple lifestyle in a beautiful country setting, with a loving partner. Seeking a sensitive, caring woman (or mother & child) to share my future. Wayne Pollard, PO Box 235, GIN GIN 4671. Ph: 07-4157-2736.

TALL CHRISTIAN BLOKE, 38, been married, likes books, herbs, theatre, swimming, hiking, computers, art. Contact George (GR134), C/- PO Box 117, SEYMOUR 3661.

FORTY-TWO YEAR OLD VIRGO MALE, 185 cm, slim-med build, dark hair & eyes & a big moustache. Seeking a genuine, quiet, caring, intelligent lady, slim-med build to 35 yrs of any nationality for correspondence, companionship & hopefully a long term r/ship with a happy home life, maybe kids. I am beginning a sml organic farm, herbal tea garden in the mtns 3 hrs SW of Brisbane so winter is cold. There will be lots to do but also time to smell the flowers & listen to the birds. I love gardening, nature, bushwalking, camping, soft music & lots of affection. I'm not wealthy but I'm a good man with a kind soul on the way to enlightenment. Please write to me, c/- BW (GR 134), PO Box 117, SEYMOUR 3661 and include a recent photo. Thankyou.

VICTORIA

LEO MALE (35), looking to meet bright, interesting woman, mid 20s to 30s. I'm s/d, s/s (always in moderation), living Melbourne but open to travel. Looking for lady who shares love of camping, good conversation, music, alternative health & technology, with view to long-term r/ship. Good SOH, honesty & down-to-earth nature essential. Reply to: Steve, PO Box 28, BURWOOD 3125. (Photo optional but phone contact appreciated as I'm not a great letter writer!) Ph: 018-107-875.

FARMER INTO ORGANICS/natural living, environment. Earth person, varied interests, n/s, s/d, GSOH, seeking soul mate, GR-type person of slim build, age open to 45. Please write to: Capricorn (GR134), C/- PO box 117, SEYMOUR 3661.

GRASSIFIEDS

CONTACTS

TASMANIA, SA & OTHER

VRILE MALE, 57, looking for a new mate, age 35-55. She would need some self financial support. East coast idyllic location. C/- PO Box 320, ST HELENS, Tas 7216.

SEEKING POSITIVE, TALL, ATTRACTIVE female age between 35-45. Country man enjoys open spaces, music & simple things in life. Played pro sport. Would like to care & share for someone. Moving to Queensland looking for business or some farm. Happy & outgoing. Please write to: JSM (GR 134), c/- PO Box 117, SEYMOUR 3661.

A WIFE IS SOUGHT: Capricornian, (dragon, heñ, monkey, rat or snake) by an able Australian man, Ram, 47, of catholic & eclectic persuasion. Please ring 08-8331-1356, or write to: Llewellyn James, 1/560 Greenhill Rd, BURNSIDE 5066. 'Who cares about the w(h)e(a)ther as long as we are together(?)'

TREES GROW SEPARATE, YET side by side, that r/ship I seek. A clean n/s, n/d, healthy caring lifestyle. 100 ac Land for Wildlife paradise ready for a GR lifestyle. Companionship, music, cuddles & love I can promise you, isolation you must like. I will gladly answer your courageous letter with picture & more details of this very young, independent 55 year old male. The Owner, PO Box 33, ST MARY'S 7215 Tas.

**DEADLINES: GR134 - AUG 30TH
GR135 - OCT 30TH**

ALL STATES & TERRITORIES

PAUL, 52, 173 cm, 75 kg, variegated hair/beard, grey eyes, healthy, no ties. Seeking a lady who is slim, n/s, healthy, literate, presentable. Prefer 45-55, petite, tertiary educated, SOH, no ties. Must not be a religious fanatic, gambler, drug user, heavily tattooed, heavy drinker, argument freak, nonstop swearer. Ph: 014-419-322 or write: Paul (GR 134), C/- PO Box 17, SEYMOUR 3661.

LATE GRASSIFIEDS

SOUTH AUSTRALIA, Site for demonstration Wind Farm wanted. Fleurieu Peninsula, Kangaroo Island or Coorong area. Rental for 12 mths with option to purchase pending approvals. PO Box 110, BROOKLYN, NSW 2083.

HOLIDAY AT BUNDABERG'S CORAL COAST, ocean front, Iluka Gardens Forest Retreat, cabins in 1 ha organic food forest, no phones/televisions/bars. Double room \$35, single bunk \$20, linen incl, communal facilities, self-catering. Dive, snorkel, shoreline coral in lava-rock pools. I'll book whale-watch or reef trips for you. Ph/fax: Leonore, 07-4159-3230.

RESPONSIBLE, 'HOUSE-TRAINED' GR couple requires rental in South Australia approximately Oct/Nov to Feb/March. Dates/location flexible (preferably quiet). References avail. Sam, PO Box 1239, FERNTREE GULLY, Vic 3156. Ph: 018-474-482.

ORGANIC HOLIDAY FARM 'Heron on Earth' - 20 km east of Devonport, central to north Tasmania's wild places. Fully equipped modern solar house, close to beaches. Rates incl bedding, towels & organic produce in season (like asparagus, raspberries, milk, eggs). Canoes & bikes avail. Information/bookings ph: 03-6428-6144. Email: heron@southcom.com.au

ARABICA COFFEE SEEDS OR PLANTS, with growing & processing info. Seeds \$10. Bare rooted seedling trees avail \$6 each + \$6 postage to Vic, NSW & Qld. Other areas or enquiries ph: Colin Westwood, 02-6672-5834. PO Box 337, MURWILLUMBAH, 2484.

EXHIBITION - 'Sustainability Beyond 2000', 25th and 26th September, 9:30 am to 7:00 pm both days. Over 50 exhibitors, w/shops, videos, talks & presentations. Renewable energy, sustainable developemnt, permaculture etc. Venue: Exhibition Park in Canberra (EPIC). Enquiries, ph Grant: 02-6297-7805, or 0413-014-614.

EASY-GOING, 6ft tall, slim, 35 yr old male-seeks compatible female for best friend & soul mate. Please write to: M, PO Box 102, ARMI-DALE, 2350 NSW.

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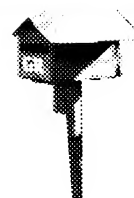
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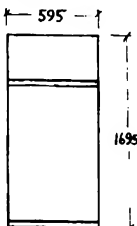
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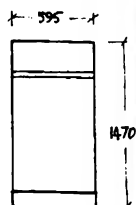
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